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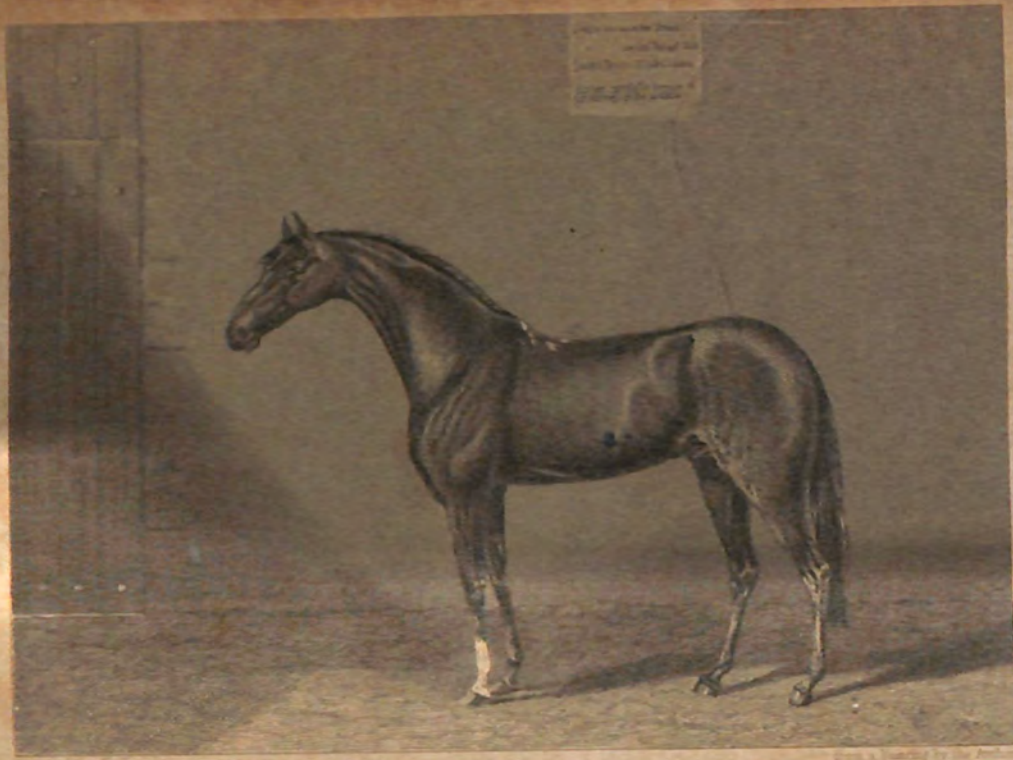

"Hayton" a bad sort for any purpose.

THE STUD,

FOR

PRACTICAL PURPOSES AND

PRACTICAL MEN.

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BY

HARRY HIEOVER,

AUTHOR OF "THE POCKET AND THE STUD."

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,

PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1849.

Men accustomed to horses will not be at all surprised at my having taken this view of the subject; well knowing that perfection is not to be got, and that the selection or rejection of a horse should not depend upon any existing imperfection, but upon its extent at the time of purchase, and its probable result.

In a subordinate way there is, moreover, somewhat of a spirit of philanthropy in the work, if the term may be allowed figuratively to apply to horse as well as man, for it comes in aid of the unfortunate. The purchaser is unfortunate if he cannot find a good horse; the horse is still more so, if he cannot find a good master. Now, if my humble efforts are conducive in bringing both together, the purchaser will be fortunate — and the horse likewise; and ten thousand times more fortunate shall I be than either, if from that circumstance this work should find some favour in the eye of the public.

H. H.

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION - - - - Page 1

CHAPTER I.

Sound or Unsound?—That's the Question. — Vagueness of the Word. — Few Horses unequivocally Sound. — Unsoundness not always a Ground for rejecting a Horse. — Warranty no Proof of Soundness. — Non-warranty not always a Proof of Unsoundness. — Illustrations - - - 9

CHAPTER II.

Internal Diseases of the Horse. — Inflammation of the Lungs a Ground for rejecting a Horse. — Cholic and Inflammation of the Bowels, ditto. — Megrim and Staggers. — Bleeding at the Nose - 38

CHAPTER III.

Permanent Diseases of the Horse. — Glanders incurable. — Illustrative Anecdote. — Defective Wind.

— Circumstances that should regulate the Acceptation or Rejection of such a Horse. — Anecdote of John Warde, Esq. — Defective Wind productive of Debility. — The Author's Advice. — Difference between a bad-winded and a broken-winded Horse. — The latter to be instantly rejected. — Roaring and whistling. — Defective Sight. — Useful Hints to Purchasers. — Chinked Back - - Page 50

CHAPTER IV.

External Imperfections, *continued.* — Ailments of the Limbs and Feet. — "Down on the Hip." — String-Halt. — Swollen or capped Hocks. — Swellings in the Neck. — Windgalls. — Crooked Fore Legs. — Knuckling over on the hind Posterns. — AILMENTS common to the Hind Legs. — Bone, Blood, or Bog Spavins. — Thorough Pins. — Splints. — Ailments of the Fore Legs. — Ring Bones and Side Bones. — Contracted Feet. — Sinews. — Corns. — Curbs. — "Unnerved" - - - - 83

CHAPTER V.

Habits and Propensities. — Biting. — Different kinds of kicking. — Kicking in the Stable. — Kicking in Harness. — Runaway. — Rearers. — Starting and shying. — Leading with the wrong Leg. — Nervousness. — Jibbing Horses. — Cutting — Broken Knees. Bad Feeders. — Low and high Action - 122

CHAPTER VI.

Points in the make and shape of the Horse, more or less desirable. — Physiognomy. — The Neck — Shoulders and Withers. — Low in the Back. — Short back Ribs. — Small Feet. — General Appearance and Condition of the Horse - Page 176

EXPLANATION OF THE PLATES.

Having, in several instances, recommended those intending to purchase horses to reject such as are not of a *good sort*, the idea suggested itself, that, although the Plates introduced into this work would of course be perfectly useless to those who are good judges, they might be serviceable to those who are not, as a mode of illustrating what I mean by a good sort, and the reverse; a distinction that very probably may not be quite understood by those to whom I venture to offer advice.

To this end I painted two sketches of a good sort and the reverse: in the latter, I meant to show an animal as bad in every point incidental to the horse as he well could be without entire deformity. The other I must beg the reader to bear in mind I did not mean as exhibiting perfection, but as precisely what it is called "a *pretty* good sort for most purposes;" that is, a horse with such points as indicate a capability for most purposes to which gentlemen put horses. I have not made him beautiful, but simply a good-looking horse, with no point about him that a judge would condemn.

I will now as briefly as possible point out the particular differences between the two animals, which, in book phrase, I will call "lessons for young beginners."

We will begin with the head, or rather ears: those of No. II. have a pricked cur-like look, rarely if ever seen in well-bred horses; the brow and forehead is narrow and contracted; the eyes devoid of all animation, and, if they could exhibit any propensity, it would be a swinish obstinacy. The jaw-bones appear close together, affording no freedom to the windpipe; the nasal bone is formed as we only see that of the cart-horse; the head is put on to

the neck, so as to render its coming towards the breast anatomically impossible, and the neck is inserted in the Wither, so as to prevent any pliability of that part; it looks as immovable as that of a rocking-horse. The want of any muscle belonging to the shoulder-blades, shows that the saddle must be carried in that forward place indicated by the white saddle marks; the hips are placed so near together that no width or strength of loin can exist between them, nor can they, as in the other horse, act as an efficacious fulcrum to propel the body. The horse with such high set narrow hips, must be as narrow as a hurdle between the rider's legs, the point of the shoulder is heavy as that of a cart-horse, and the shoulder itself devoid of any thing like obliquity; in fact, fancy a rider on such a horse's back, and it will be seen that his toes must be level with or before the front of the horse's arm. All this, joined with the animal's legs standing so much under, shows that the rider's weight must be thrown so far forward and out of equilibrium, that we should almost expect the rump of the beast to Tit up with us as if sitting on the end of a school-form; from want of any development of brisket, he must carry his girths just behind his arms, which will be constantly galled and sore from the contact. It will be seen that he has quite as much *flesh* on him as the other, but no *muscle*. Supposing the creature to attempt a gallop, he must, as the camelopard does, bring each hind leg outside the fore ones, or he must over-reach every stride he took. His hocks are formed to throw out curbs. His hind fetlocks or pasterns are so depressed that the tension on the back tendons of the legs must cause partial or total break down, and his feet stand with the toes so out that he must cut with each inner heel. Thighs he has none; they are at least so long, thin, and shrunk, that I can only compare them with a wretched, long, shanky, dry American ham, that a friend of mine treated me with lately at breakfast, pur-

chased under the assurance of its being a "Westphalian." Perhaps the way in which the brute carries his tail is intended to hide such apologies for thighs.

On looking at the fore legs, a judge might be tempted to say, were ever such legs seen under a horse? I could assure any one making such a remark, that I frequently see gentlemen riding horses, with most perfect satisfaction and confidence, with legs very little better; in fact, with some, I am quite sure that their want of bone would be thought elegant, nay, perhaps held as demonstrative of high breeding. I really once saw a young gentleman refuse a very fine horse because his legs were not thin and elegant. If we turn to the near fore leg of No. I., we shall see it standing as determinately firm as if formed to sustain alone the weight of the whole body of the horse, the feet looking like solid blocks, fit for any roads; while those of the other are not fellows, but both of as bad formation as possible, and such as must become diseased on the slightest work.

Fortunately for such legs and feet, the narrowness and depressed formation of the loins and want of muscular development all along the back, must prevent the animal sustaining weight for any length of time or distance.

I have put the creature, that I will not call a horse, in the only place where he could be of any use, namely, in a riding-school, for there he might be used just to teach a beginner to sit on the back of something moveable; and if from bad actions which he must have, cutting his stilts of legs to pieces, which from his feet and ankles, he must do; or from his shoulders, and the way his legs stand under him, he should come on his nose, which it is almost certain he would do; the sawdust on the school would make a soft place for rider and horse to fall on.

If the reader wants a good sort he has only to look at Plate I., and get a horse something like the one represented, and as much better as he can; he will then not have a *very*

bad sort. But he may take still further guidance from the engravings; for if he looks at No. II. and gets a horse in every particular diametrically the reverse of that, he will get something of shape and make also, and one that it would afford me much pleasure to make a portrait of for his purchaser: if, however, he should get any thing bearing the slightest resemblance to the "raythe bad sort," I hope my good intentions in giving the advice I have will plead in my favour that I may never be inflicted with a sight of him.

THE STUD,

FOR

PRACTICAL PURPOSES AND PRACTICAL MEN.

INTRODUCTION.

MANY persons would without fear or hesitation enter on the task I have here undertaken: many might very properly do so from being more competent to the undertaking; and many more, from the self-conviction that they are so, would fearlessly at once plunge into the matter. How they might bring themselves out of it, perhaps, admits of as much doubt as I feel in entering on the subject.

To decide when it would be altogether prudent to reject or to select any article of purchase is no easy task; for, in all such cases, there is so much to be considered pro and con; so many circumstances to be combined before we make up our resolves either way, that it is only by pointing out the consequences of certain objections, that we can

pretend or hope to guide the judgment of a purchaser to his probable advantage.

Supposing ourselves qualified to do this, so far as regards the generality of persons, we then come to the far greater difficulty of advising as to particular individuals and particular tastes. For instance —

A lady, for whom I have the greatest possible respect, and who, in most things, has a correct and refined taste, has a piano that has been one, I should say, an honest three-score years; to my uncultivated ear it is somewhat worse in musical sound than the worst hurdy-gurdy I ever heard ground by some forlorn being who gets paid not to horrify the neighbourhood by his music. Yet my friend avers, that, though, in point of compass of notes, both in sound and number, it is not one of Broadwood's last efforts, "it has many *sweet* notes." I should like to find the man who could direct the judgment of my valued friend in selecting what would really be worth having as an instrument.

Little flattering as may be the assertion, there are many men whose taste and judgment in horses are about on a par with those of my friend in pianos.

But, independent of the taste or judgment of particular persons about horses — be it mediocre or bad (for this book is not written for good judges),

— we must consider the qualifications and disqualifications that would be respectively most desirable or objectionable to the particular party for whom the animal is intended, and by whom it is to be used. This might not be attended with much difficulty, if advising a particular individual; but it must be apparent to every one, that to discuss or point out the advantage or disadvantage of certain perfections and imperfections as relative to particular purchasers, would take a volume of no portable size and weight. And then we should not probably effect our object, as the faces of persons do not differ more than do their tastes, ideas, and predilections.

All that can, therefore, be done, or, at least, all I can do, or shall attempt, is to mention, in general terms, the usual consequences or effects of some of the different ailments, habits, action, shape, and qualities of the horse, so far as regards their probable and general influence, as to his utility at such work as he is fitted or intended for.

In touching on his looks, I shall only do so under the idea that most men wish, in making a purchase, to get that which is likely to do credit to their taste and judgment; that is, so far as the price given will admit, taking, at the same time, qualifications also into account.

It may very fairly, and indeed justly, be said, that every eye has its beauty; and every man has

a perfect right to please his own taste: no one can dispute this. I should only venture to suggest that, if any one puts himself to trouble and expense in keeping *any thing*, he may as well select a something good-looking of its kind. Now, whether a man makes choice of a gipsy face, or a blonde, for a *chère amie*, has nothing to do with good taste; if he is pleased by a beautiful copper-coloured face, tastefully tattooed, he may still lay claim to even classic taste in foreign beauty; but what would we say of him who selected a form and face, that, every time it was beheld, the very boys shouted, as they did, by his own confession, at poor Billy Barlow, "there goes a guy."

If any man be sophist enough to aver that he does not care for what others may think of what he has, he deceives himself: he *does* care: he may, and in many cases would be right in keeping what he likes, instead of giving it up in deference to the opinion of others: but a feeling of regret will creep in if his favourite is not admired, or thought desirable. We live greatly, and indeed by far too much in many cases, for the "eyes of the world;" and our vanity, being gratified by the admiration of others, constitutes a greater portion of the satisfaction we derive from possessing *any* thing than we may be tempted to allow even to ourselves.

It may at first strike the reader that I am guilty

of a certain degree of presumption in attempting to guide his taste in the selection of horses, in respect of their looks. I should most certainly be guilty of great presumption if I set up my individual taste, and judgment, as a criterion by which others should be guided. But I do not do so as regards this matter any more than I do in other particulars: I merely lay before others what are held to be points of beauty, or their reverse, by those whose judgment is to be taken as correct. The only accusation of self-sufficiency that could with justice be brought against me is, the thinking that I do know what are the opinions of good judges and critics in such matters. To this I beg to state, by way of reply, that I have from childhood so constantly heard the opinions of such persons on all things relating to horses, that I really have them by heart; and, this being the case, I trust the laying of such opinions before the reader may in many cases be serviceable to him: this is the only merit I lay claim to.

I act precisely on the same principle when treating on the shape, make, and action of horses, which are matters of far more serious import than his looks; that is, for general purposes, and for the generality of owners; for, though there are exceptions to most cases, the man who purchases in conformity with the general opinion of good judges, will unquestionably be far more likely to get that

which will not disappoint him, than he who buys counter to such received opinions; the man who does the latter, will most certainly find that in almost every case he gets a comparatively worthless object, as regards probably both looks and utility.

In treating to a *certain point* on the ailments incidental to the horse — which I have only done to very limited extent, — by way of excuse for venturing to do so *at all*, I beg to remark, that the little I do know on such subjects has been learned by attending, as an amateur, numberless lectures on diseases and anatomy, and as many post mortem examinations as I have had opportunity of witnessing, and also from having cut and hacked, for I could in no way call it dissected, various parts of the dead animal; but far beyond this, from the kindness and liberality of the profession, to whom I always had sense enough to apply when in the smallest doubt; and as, in such cases, I applied to the highest in the profession that I could get at, I always found them most cheerfully and liberally aid my wish to gain insight into any ailment on which I solicited their opinion. All this certainly has enabled me in many cases to act for myself, that is, for my horses, when good professional assistance was not to be had; but the more I learned of the nature of diseases and lamenesses, the more I learned the

advantage of calling in better judgment than my own when it was at hand, and completed my invariable resolve of keeping out of my stables — that positive pest — the common *soi-disant horse doctor.* The remarks I make, therefore, on such subjects are intended to induce the reader to do the same, by showing, to the best of my judgment, what ailments are of small importance, and what are of serious import. If he finds (supposing my knowledge of such matters to be correct) that his horse has only a trifling ailment, he will do wisely by letting it alone, in preference to calling in *any* empiric; if it is one of a serious nature, let him not hesitate to get the very best professional assistance that is to be procured. What I say, therefore, is solely to guide his judgment in deciding which course to pursue; for if he takes the middle one, by getting horse-doctor advice, he will find that the old adage "In medio tutissimus ibis" will be the very worst: the import of the disease will not only be exaggerated, but the disease itself will, in most cases, be aggravated by improper treatment.

Relative to certain tricks, and what are termed vices, in horses, I enumerate the ordinary ones, and their consequences, that the purchaser may be enabled to decide as to whether they are such as to *him* may not be quite objectionable, or whether they are such as would render the intended pur-

chase useless, or, at least, in a greater or less degree troublesome and annoying to him; for let him not "lay the flattering unction to his soul" that he can cure them. Such things are often to be done by *some* men, but certainly not by such as those whom I expect to benefit by *any* advice of mine.

CHAPTER I.

SOUND OR UNSOUND? — THAT'S THE QUESTION. — VAGUENESS OF THE WORD. — FEW HORSES UNEQUIVOCALLY SOUND. — UNSOUNDNESS NOT ALWAYS A GROUND FOR REJECTING A HORSE. — WARRANTY NO PROOF OF SOUNDNESS. — NON-WARRANTY NOT ALWAYS A PROOF OF UNSOUNDNESS. — ILLUSTRATIONS.

AFTER, this sketch of the object of the book, and having, I hope, by explaining my motives, offered sufficient apology for bringing it forward, I shall commence by what I conceive to be of the most importance to the general utility of the animal, which is, health and soundness, or their opposites.

Sound or unsound? — "that's the question;"

and a very proper one to put to any one of whom we intend, or at least contemplate, to purchase a horse. If the seller is a dealer — be he respectable or not; if he is *decisively* told the horse is to be bought subject to the opinion of some known veterinarian of eminence — the man will not be such an idiot as to warrant an animal sound that has any decided unsoundness about him at that *particular* time (I say particular time for

reasons that will shortly appear); for he knows the penalty for so doing will in most cases be the loss of his time, the detection of his horse as an unsound one, his rejection by the purchaser, with ten and sixpence to pay as the veterinarian's fee, and as a very proper hint to show more judgment or more honesty in future before he warrants an unsound horse.

Supposing the seller to be an honest man, but no great adept at deciding on the soundness of his horse; if he warrants him, we have at least the satisfaction of knowing, or, at all events, good reason to conclude, there is nothing so bad about him as to render him incapable of the work he has been at; for, if he was so, the owner must know it, and would not give a warranty that in such a case could not hold good, and under which his horse would be returned on his hands.

We will now say something about this hackneyed term sound: it may be supposed that the word is explicit enough, and most persons conceive it to be so; but the term "sound" really admits of as much contrariety of opinion as the word tipsy; one man considers another so if, at ten at night, he is not precisely as cool and collected as he was at one in the day. Another only calls a man so when he lies on the ground and holds himself on by the carpet: so as to soundness, some persons cannot see that a horse is

unsound, unless he is dot-and-go-one—works his flanks like the drone of a bagpipe—or blows and roars like a blacksmith's bellows; while some are so fastidious as to consider a horse as next to valueless because he may have a corn that he never feels, or a thrush for which he is not, nor likely to be, one sovereign the worse.

So far as relates to such hypercritical deciders on soundness, I will venture to say that, if they brought me twenty reported sound horses in succession, I would find a something in all of those produced that would induce such persons to reject them, though, perhaps, not one among the lot had any thing about him of material consequence. To say the least, I will venture to assert that nine-tenths of the horses now in daily use are more or less unsound. I make no reservation as to the description of horse, his occupation, or what he may be worth. I scarcely ever had, indeed scarcely ever knew, a horse that had been used, and tried sufficiently to prove him a good one, that was in every particular unequivocally sound. I make no doubt but there are thousands of owners of horses who will at once say I am wrong in this assertion, and would be ready to produce their own horses as undeniable proofs, whereby to back their opinion and refute mine. Now I will further venture to say, for the comfort of such gentlemen, that, on producing these very

undeniable proofs, it would be found that there is scarcely a sound horse among them, though they, the owners, do not know it or think so. They may, perhaps, say that their horses are never lame: perhaps not; that is, not lame in their estimation, or to their eye; but I daily see horses that go to a certain degree indubitably lame, while their owners conceive them to be as indubitably sound. These horses, perhaps, all do their work perfectly well, are held as sound by owners, servants, acquaintance, and casual observers; but a practised eye would detect an inequality in their going, as a watchmaker would do the same in the movement of a watch, though I might look for a week, or listen for the same length of time, without being able to either see or hear the variation. The watch might, however, on the average keep fair time, but it would not be a perfect one: and what matters, if it answers all the purposes for which we want it? A really bad watch that cannot keep time is a different affair. It is pretty much the same with a horse. If the unsoundness is such as to render him unable to do his work, or even to do it unpleasantly to himself or owner, or if it is likely to bring him to this, have nothing to do with him: if, however, this is not the case, or likely to be so, if you like him, *buy him.* I would ask persons so desirous of a quite sound horse, whether they

suppose (if they go to a meet of fox-hounds, and see three or four score of hunters there, worth from one to two hundred each) that these horses are sound. If any one is young enough to conclude they are, I will venture to tell him he is under the influence of a very material error. There are not, I am certain, one dozen among the lot decidedly sound. That there cannot be *much the matter* with their wind is doubtless the case, for they could not go *well* if there was, with the exception of some being, perhaps, more or less roarers or whistlers; and that but few of them are lame is probable, though many of them, probably, are always a little so the next morning after a severe run, and even these would not be sold under a high price.

The generality of race horses are probably sound, or nearly so, when starting for the Derby (though this is by no means always the case); but by the time they have been in training long enough, and have run often enough to have established their character, there are numbers of them that no *veterinary surgeon* could pass as sound horses, though then, perhaps, at their maximum price, not merely as stud horses, but as race horses in full work.

It is not improbable that a man may say, I begin to believe that few horses that have done work are quite sound; but a sound one I will have: I

will, therefore, buy a four years' old horse that has *never done a day's work.*

I will acknowledge that if he does so he may, probably, get his desideratum; but do not let him make too sure of this. There are such things as four years' olds, unsound, as well as worked, horses. But, supposing him to have got this sound animal, what has he got? An animal that he has to run the risk of making useful, so far as teaching him his business goes; and by the time this is effectually done, and the colt has arrived at a serviceable age, he will probably be quite as unsound as many of those he has rejected: independent of which, and supposing him to continue sound, the breeder of this horse must have better luck or better judgment in breeding than his neighbours, if more than one in four or five that he does breed turn out desirable horses. If he turns out but a middling sort of beast, it is but small satisfaction to know that he is sound; in fact, so little satisfaction should I feel, that, if I was compelled to keep and use him, so far from rejoicing that he was sound, I should only regret that he was not dead.

If my reader pays me the compliment of attaching any weight to what I write, he will probably say that I have put him quite out of heart with respect to buying, or hoping to get a sound horse. This is precisely what I wished to do: that is, so

far as getting what he considers a sound one; but not at all as to getting what I consider quite sound *enough*, which is one that can and does do his work well and pleasantly, bears promise of continuing to do so, and has no outward signs of being otherwise. It may be judged, by what I have last said, that, in offering an opinion on the propriety of purchasing or declining a horse, my object is, not merely to show the soundness, appearance, shape, and action, that renders him desirable, but to point out when, *not* having these attributes or qualifications in full perfection, he may still be safely purchased. The writer or adviser who prevents any one purchasing that which is not desirable, deserves thanks. This few will deny. Let me hope, then, that he who prevents a purchaser refusing, from mistaken ideas or prejudice, that which is desirable, has also some claim to the same return for his advice: and this is a leading feature of this work.

I have recommended a purchaser at all times to inquire whether a horse on sale is warranted, and have given my reasons for so doing. But I beg it to be understood that I by no means advise a horse being immediately rejected because a warranty may be refused or objected to; for it does not carry with it any certainty that the animal is unsound, or could not be warranted as conscientiously as many that are so. Many men,

gentlemen particularly, make it a rule never to warrant any horse. I know, personally, several who act thus; and the general motive for this determination is, not to be plagued by a horse being returned after they have, perhaps, suited themselves with another, and, in support of such motive, resolve not to warrant. I must in candour say that, allowing, as we must, that there are numberless tricks among sellers, there is a fair sprinkling of the same among purchasers; I would not buy, or at least I would not recommend any one else to buy (though I have done it scores of times), a horse of a suspected person without a *written* warranty, an examination by a veterinarian of known talent and respectability, and, further, without ascertaining the seller's pecuniary responsibility, and also his place of abode; for, after all, something may peep out, after a few days' work, that no professional skill could detect,—an old strain, for instance.

But though I have, as I have observed, often bought a horse on my own judgment without warranty, and even from those who, I doubt not, if they got hold of a pocket-book lined, would not be nice as to its appropriation, I would not, or ever did, give a warranty to one of this class; for if I had done so, as sure as the horse was a horse, he would have been returned temporarily lame, half blind, or dosed in some way; for the pur-

pose, or at least with the intent, of getting off a large share of the original purchase money. This is a pretty sure and lucrative game for a man who has no character to lose. But the seller who has one, in order to avoid law (where plenty of fellows could be found who would swear anything) and abuse from him who purchased the horse, either takes the animal back, or refunds a heavy sum for having a sound horse injured, for the time being, by a miscreant. If the seller takes him back, though here the fellow would miss a gain, no harm is done to him. If he gets that for thirty that he knows was cheap at fifty (supposing that to have been the sum originally given) he makes twenty over and above selling at an advance on fifty — no bad day's work, a very common trade, and a *wee bit* more lucrative one than writing on such matters.

It may be said, that, though the refusal to give a warranty to such persons as I have described, or even to a stranger, may hold good, as a matter of precaution, it is no reason why such should not be given to a gentleman, or by respectable men to each other. Such persons do not often object to give it; but many do; some from an over scrupulousness or fear, that, if any thing should turn out wrong, they might lay themsel open to a suspicion of a wish to deceive; and with persons not much versed in horses, such an

impression might very probably be the result; for such persons will entertain the erroneous idea that a man cannot have an unsound horse without knowing it. Now I have no hesitation in saying, that a man may have had a horse and ridden him for twelve months, conceiving him to be sound, and yet, on producing the animal to undergo professional examination, he may get the cheering information that he has defective vision, defective wind, and is lame. Some readers may think such a catastrophe as overdrawn; or, perhaps, impossible. If they do, let them ask a veterinary surgeon;—I suspect that he would not only give his opinion on the possibility of such a case, but could narrate instances of its occurrence (or something very like it).

I do not attempt to say, that such an occurrence as I have specified would be likely to take place with a good judge of a horse: but it is by no means an uncommon, but, on the contrary, a very common, circumstance, that such a man may warrant a horse sound, conceive him to be so, and have good grounds for his opinion, even by a fair trial of him; and yet, when this horse comes to be looked at by a professional eye, he may be rejected as "unsound," that is, "not sound." To many persons these two terms may appear perfectly synonymous; and so, in strict fact, they are: but though a professional man, or

a very experienced judge, might consider a horse as not sound—in fact, unsound—it does not follow that he is (as some persons may suppose such a horse to be) really lame; he may be a very serviceable animal, but not, professionally speaking, *sound.*

Now, supposing I could bring any person or number of persons to believe the fact, that a man conversant with horses might sell, as a sound horse, one that might, on proper inspection, be returned as unsound, all I could say or write—all that men whose judgment is ten times better than mine could say or write — would never convince the majority of persons that a dealer could innocently do the same thing. If his judgment errs, and leads him into error as to the soundness of his horse, it is set down, not as wilful and corrupt perjury as to oath, but most undoubtedly as to his word and honesty.

It certainly is a part of a dealer's business to make himself a good judge of the soundness of the animal in which he deals; and good judges in this matter many (but by no means all) of them are: but the part of their trade in which they are by far the most perfect is the looks, action, and fitness of the animal for the different description of customers each dealer has to please; and beyond this, the proper price that they can judiciously give for each horse so as to ensure profit on his sale. I have seen dealers buy the same

horse as sound that I have rejected as unsound, having had opportunity of more minute and lengthened examination than they had; and no wonder, when we consider the little time that a dealer in a fair has to examine his purchases. It would really seem, by the way in which persons not much acquainted with horses or dealers condemn the latter pell mell, in any case of their selling an unsound horse, that they thought dealers must be infallible in their judgment, and never get such an animal without knowing it, when, in fact, there are no men in the world so likely to get unsound horses if their quickness of eye and experience did not save them.

Having said thus much of the propriety of asking for a warranty in purchasing a horse, the mistakes made in supposing the animal can stand such test, and the objections of many persons to giving one, let us now consider what is the intent and meaning of

WARRANTING A HORSE SOUND.

The warranting any thing — if I am right in my understanding of the term, and its intent is simple enough, and easily defined — is an engagement that, if the article does not prove to be such as the seller represented it to be, it shall be taken back and the cost price refunded. This any

one of the most obtuse faculties cannot but fully comprehend, but fortunately for the gentlemen who preside at or attend our courts of law, and unfortunately for every other person, though the term of warranty admits but of one construction, the different ideas that different persons entertain of how far the object warranted does or does not accord with the description given, ever has, now does, and, unless some alteration is made in the law, ever will be a constant source of litigation between seller and purchaser.

I cannot but consider, though, perhaps, I am wrong in so doing, that there is a difference between a thing legally, or morally, answering a warranty, and the consequence of its doing so rests greatly in the object sought for and warranted. I will state a case as relates to horses.

We will suppose a man to be a breeder, or some one selling a young horse to a London dealer: he warrants him sound. And we will say that a perfectly sound horse he is, so far as being free from lameness, or any thing likely to render him so; but it is found, on examination, that he has a slight thrush or corn. The dealer knows, and would admit, that the animal to *use* was not five pounds in a hundred the worse for this, if the feet or foot was otherwise a perfect one; but this simple departure from being *perfect* is fatal to the dealer who buys for sale: he is aware he will be

required to give a warranty with the horse when sold, and no veterinary surgeon could pass such a horse as *sound.* This horse is legally unsound.

The same person, or any other, sells a hunter to a gentleman or friend, and warrants him. On cutting down the foot a little lower than usual, we will say there are *two* corns found, or something that resembles them: perhaps, after all, only a superficial extravasation, from the shoes having borne too hard on the heels; the horse has not been tender on them, goes firm and sound, and has good feet. This horse I should consider *morally,* though not legally, sound, and ought not, if a desirable purchase, to be returned. The seller has made good his word and intention; he has sold a hunter or horse that comes up to his description of him, namely, one likely to answer the purpose of the purchaser; yet hundreds would return such a horse, and if any demur was made by the seller, would go to law as malevolently as if they had been robbed by a professed scoundrel.

Personally, I would never object to give a warranty of a horse to any man whom I knew to be (first of course) an honourable one, a man of consistency, that is, one who, in common parlance, knows his own mind (which by the by thousands do not, so far as horse affairs go), a good judge, and one who knows how to manage his horse when he has got him, both in the stable and out.

A man of this sort will neither have recourse to any unhandsome practices, or give unnecessary trouble. The rogue will do the first, the man who is not a judge of the animal he buys will be all but sure to do the latter.

Every body will, I know, agree with me as to the possibility of a dealer in horses playing an unfair part with a horse that has been warranted sound to him; in fact, almost every one not conversant with horse affairs will not only think it possible or probable that he might, but would, from prejudice, feel assured he would do so; for such persons hold rascality and dealers in horses as synonymous.

Without attempting to remove the prejudice of such persons against dealers, or having any interest in the matter, not being, or ever having been, a dealer myself, I must, as a set-off against the tricks of such men, beg to assure my readers that, though the instances are of course much more rare, I have known as positively rascally tricks played by men holding the rank of gentlemen as any dealer could perpetrate.

I will mention one which, "cum multis aliis," came to my personal knowledge. A person moving in the sphere, and in ordinary matters acting up to the part, of a gentleman had purchased a horse of a dealer; not being a good judge, he found in a day or two the horse was

not what he wanted, and, being a very near man in money matters, he could not find it in his heart to go and give the seller a proper premium to take the animal back. Return him he could not, for he was all he was represented to be. He was thus, as Jonathan says, "in a fix;" but those who are disposed to employ his agency can generally find a certain gentleman in black (I do not mean a lawyer) at their elbow ready to give them a hint. This individual, however, was, in this particular case, otherwise habited, namely, in a stable dress; in short, he was the gentleman's groom, who, not having probably been fee'd to his content, undertook to return the horse, and stated to his honourable master the means by which it was to be effected. He, with ingenuity enough, drew a nail from the horse-shoe, drove the same nail in again (for a fresh one would have led to immediate detection) a little too close to the sensible part of the foot. Of course the next day the horse was lame, and was sent back, the rascal vowing to the dealer he remarked he was a "lame un" the second day after "master bought him." What was the dealer to do. To go into court against a man not a dealer was certain condemnation. The very wig the judge might wear would decide against the seller, from knowing the head it usually covered would "à tort et à travers" do the same thing; then to offend a man of the pur-

chaser's rank would be fatal again. The man felt convinced something unfair had been done to his horse; but, with more liberality than his customer would have shown on any occasion, he never suspected him of having had recourse to or connived at any thing even ungentlemanly in the affair, but suspected it lay wholly with the groom, well knowing that, if, from any cause, a horse is purchased without their hearty concurrence, these gentlemen are pretty fertile in expedients to get rid of him, unless their master is one not to be played with. This precious piece of honesty having left his master, as a sum up of his character, confessed the whole affair of the returned horse to a friend of mine, from whom I had the anecdote.

The result of the dealer proving restive in the above affair would have been this: he would have been set down as a great rogue for selling the gentleman an unsound horse; whereas the true state of the case was, the gentleman was no little simpleton for buying what did not suit him, and then a consummate rogue for returning a sound animal as an unsound one. But so "the world wags."

Such is the pleasure of warranting horses in any way to some persons. We will with pleasure allow that few gentlemen would play the above part; but though they would not, if they got an

animal they did not like, he would be made a constant theme of complaint to the seller, which I should hold quite as great an annoyance as taking a horse back: indeed, in many cases, a far greater one.

Now, warranting to a good judge is quite a different affair: he seldom buys what will not suit him; he knows what he wants, knows the proper horse to select for his purpose, and sees, on looking at and trying a particular animal, whether he is one calculated to meet his wants and wishes. He would, therefore, regret as much as the seller could, should his purchase turn out unsound, because he would, by his doing so, miss what in all other respects was what he wanted; and, even should some trifling unsoundness manifest itself, if, on inspection, it was decided to be only temporary, he would either retain the horse, under (as we will term it) protest, or, if he sent him to the owner's stable, would retake him on being pronounced by proper authority sound. Further than this, such a man rests his selection on his own judgment; and should he show, or be asked to show, his new purchase, he would do so to men whose judgment would most probably coincide with his own; whereas the man who knows little of such matters generally shows his purchase to, and asks the opinion of, every friend and acquaintance. These will be, most likely, persons

knowing as little as himself. But still, feeling themselves qualified to give their opinion, and as each fancies he evinces his knowledge by pointing out something that he conceives objectionable, the horse shortly becomes in the same state as the picture the artist exposed, requesting each passer to put a chalk mark on any part he thought defective. The consequence was, the picture became one mass of white chalk. So would the horse, if each friend marked, instead of verbally giving, his opinion. The owner shortly really believes he has got a horse possessing every earthly failing incidental to the animal. Even without warranty, the selling a horse to such a man, if not one of the deadly sins, is certainly one of the deadly abominations; I would sell such a man a halter if he wished it, but most certainly not a horse.

As to warranting in its general usage, I must say, that I consider it an unfair thing to ask any man to do, and a most impolitic thing on the part of the seller to consent to; that is, as warranties are now worded, and expected to bear. To this mode of sale, I make the two following objections; first, it compels a man to trust (say) two hundred pounds, or, what is worse, an animal worth that sum, to the management of another: this, perhaps, a very improper, — that is, injudicious — manager of an animal — that a little inattention, to say nothing of unfair usage — may

injure in a week, and then, if this animal get unwell, or lame, from such treatment, which it would be perhaps difficult to prove, the owner is expected to return the two hundred, which, of course, is of the same value it was, in exchange for his property deteriorated more or less in worth. The second objection I make is, that we ask, and indeed compel, a man to engage that which it is absolutely impossible he can engage, — namely, that a perishable thing *shall continue* sound...

I could make no objection to a clause, or agreement between two parties, by which the seller should be legally bound to take back any article sold if it did not come up to the representation made of it when sold; for instance, it would be quite fair and most reasonable to require a man to give, under his hand-writing, what he verbally says in recommendation of the article sold, under written engagement to take it back if his representation prove false. We will suppose a horse to be represented a sound one; let the seller give a certificate that he has no cause to doubt his being so; that he has never seen any ailment in the horse, or, if he has, let him state what it has been: let the horse then be taken and examined by a veterinarian; if he considers the horse sound, and likely to remain so, whether the representation states he never was known by the seller to be amiss, or that he had been so, there, I con-

ceive, the warranty should end, unless it is proved the certificate or representation was false. No veterinary surgeon could, or would, give an engagement that a horse shall or will remain sound. Yet we expect the seller to do this. Requiring this is unfair, and, in fact, absurd.

Supposing any one to be hardy enough to give one of the usual warranties, I would most strongly recommend any gentleman, or any respectable man, to insist on the animal being examined by a known first-rate professional man, prior to its being delivered to the buyer. If passed sound, it would cost the seller nothing; and to the buyer, if he can judge of a horse's value to the precise sum of ten and sixpence, it is more than I ever could, even supposing him to be a twenty pound hack. This would, in case of any thing going wrong, be a host in the seller's favour, and save a great deal of defending and proving, in case legal measures should take place; and would certainly have great weight as to the intent of the seller; and further, on the horse being again shown to the veterinarian, who examined him at the time, he would decide whether it was a recent ailment, or arose from some former one of which he had detected any symptoms of having formerly existed. The taking something like such a guarantee as I have specified gives us a positive hold on the seller. His horse could not have been *seri-*

ously affected by any ailment while in his possession without his knowledge. If it was a serious one, he must be aware of what it was from any professional man he had called in; and he further must know whether the animal has since suffered from the same ailment or the effects of it. So, by taking such guarantee as specified, if he gives it wrongfully, it would be no difficult matter to detect him in falsehood, and then not only punish him by returning him his horse, but in such a case it would be quite just and proper to make him pay all expenses attendant on the transaction; in fact, if he was indicted for wilful fraud, he would only meet his deserts.

Now, with our present form of warranty, what do we get? Only, virtually, the seller's OPINION and belief that the horse he sells is a sound one. If he is a good judge, and a rogue, he pretty well knows whether the horse will pass an examination or not, but may equally well know that he will be lame after a few days' work; and if the horse is not examined at the *time of sale*, such a man will be sure to find plenty of witnesses to swear he was sound at that period; and this statement it might be difficult to disprove by counter evidence. If the man be ever so honest or honorable, if he is not a competent judge in such matters, his warranty is not worth a farthing, so far as his personal opinion goes. But

the guarantee is not an *opinion* of *any one*: it is a *statement* of facts. If we ask a man what is certainly a plain question, namely, has your horse ever been lame in your possession? and he says no, we have then to judge whether he knows when a horse is lame or not; for he may have been so twenty times or always so, and the man may not have perceived it; but if we ask whether he ever called in professional aid to the animal, we then fix him, for we can resort to the veterinarian.

So if we take a warranty of quiet in harness, we only get an opinion asked, perhaps, on the chance of a horse going quiet from what he has lately done; he may have kicked or run away twenty times, and the man saves himself by saying, he thought he had left it off, as he had gone quietly *lately:* but, have you ever seen or known him to be vicious in harness? brings on a direct answer; and we should then be justified in returning the horse, if we choose to do so, however quiet he might appear, if we found he *had been* vicious; that is, if the seller declared he had not: and to return such a horse would be quite judicious, unless the buyer had great confidence in himself, and choose to run the risk of a fresh outbreak.

It will be seen from what I say, that I in no way wish warranties to be made less stringent

than they are; on the contrary, I would wish them to be so worded as to be more binding on the seller in a proper way. But I most decidedly object to a man being harassed, annoyed, and probably prosecuted after he has sold an animal that he conscientiously believed, and had good reason to believe, to be a sound one at the time of sale, because the purchaser is unfortunate enough to find him sick or lame after he has got him; a circumstance that very probably no professional skill, no human foresight, had reason to prognosticate.

There are few men placed in more difficult situations than professional men, when called to examine a horse between buyer and seller; for it must be borne in mind, that, in taking their opinion, we do not take it as to whether the horse is one that they would buy for their own use, or recommend others to buy, so far as relates to his being sound, or the probability of his remaining so: we only ask if he is sound or unsound at the time being. If, therefore, the animal has no ailment at the time, or shows any evident signs of something that will shortly render him so, the examiner must, in justice to the seller, pass his horse sound. Still there may be a something about the horse that, in the private opinion of the professional, is not likely to stand long the test of work. Yet it would not do to refuse passing a

horse sound, because in his opinion he will not remain so; for it is but opinion at best; and though probably a correct view of the case, still it is not a certainty: therefore the examiner, in justice, must pass the animal sound, though he would not purchase him for himself or another person.

If we purchased subject to the general opinion of the veterinarian, as to whether, from what he sees, he would recommend the horse being purchased on the score of being one likely to stand sound, it would be quite a different affair; but this is a responsibility few professional men would take upon themselves, and it is an ordeal that few sellers would submit their horses to.

Thus it will be seen, that, though a horse may be passed sound, and very properly so, still we may get one that, in three months, will be, in stable phrase, "as lame as if his leg was broke:" and no fault to be imputed either to the seller or the veterinarian that passed him. Therefore, use all the precaution we may, there must always remain considerable risk as to a horse standing sound in work; and if, as some persons would do, we buy one that has "never done a day's work," instead of this diminishing the risk, it adds to it much more than if we bought one sound at the time out of an omnibus, or even street cab; for such have proved their capability of standing

work, which not one young horse in half-a-dozen will do without shortly getting amiss *somewhere;* in fact, like old china, that is quite as strong or stronger after it has been broken, and then properly cemented and rivetted, so are seasoned horses much less liable to get amiss in work than young ones, though the former, like the china, may have been chipped, cracked, broken, and put together again.

There can be no doubt but the most certain way of getting a sound horse, and one likely to continue so, would be to make interest with a veterinary surgeon to go as a *private friend,* and examine the one intended to be purchased (a favour, I allow, it would be most difficult to obtain). Here he would be bound by no professional delicacy or rules to prevent his giving, not merely an opinion, but advice as to the promise of the animal: if he has good taste and judgment as to other particulars, so much the better: if you think he has not, first take the advice of some good judge as to looks, fitness for the intended purpose for which the animal is purchased, and also as to fairness of price. Having done this, and then got the opinion as regards soundness, there is little fear of being disappointed in the way the purchase will turn out, "barring" (as Paddy says) "bad luck."

The chief end and aim of books written for the use of purchasers (at least such as I have read)

appears to have been the putting them on their guard against dealers in horses, together with the perfectly useless attempt to render the purchaser "au fait" of the innumerable tricks that may be played by rogues to impose on the unwary. The motive unquestionably has been a good, indeed a laudable, one. But "a little knowledge" is a dangerous thing; and if, by imparting this much, a man is rendered confident in himself, the chances are, that such advice does him harm instead of good: in fact, if an author made a purchaser get by heart each and all of these tricks, he would do him little service, unless he first made him complete master of the varied ways in which the trick is performed, and then gave him as quick an eye in detecting, as the rogue has in carrying them out. This would require initiation from youth in such matters, and constant practice afterwards.

If we knew a man had to take five hundred pounds in his pocket from Bond Street to Whitechapel, it would be proper enough to tell him that pockets are picked in a crowd, picked while looking at the windows of attractive shops, in omnibusses, or by very gentlemenly men while the attention is taken up by some villanous looking fellow walking purposely by your side. This would, however, by no means ensure his safety; for while he was guarding against the usual way of compassing such tricks, a new one would be practised,

and his five hundred pounds would probably be the reward of another plan. It strikes me that, instead of the futile attempt of making him a match in dexterity for a pickpocket, the safe plan would be, after telling him of the danger, to advise him not to walk the street with the treasure in his pocket, but to spend three shillings in a cab.

I go something on this plan. I tell him, to the best of my ability, what are real, imaginary, or tolerable defects in the animal to be purchased. This quantum of knowledge will prevent his taking trouble about a horse with some absolute and decidedly objectionable point or points about him, and will prevent his at once rejecting one without good reason; and this is, I consider, quite sufficient knowledge for most private individuals, as I sum up the whole by recommending him to take professional advice. It may be said that, if we are always to take a professional opinion on purchasing a horse, a man requires no knowledge at all. This idea would, however, be quite erroneous; for, unless a man is taught some insight into the points, action, habits, and ailments of the horse, he would be losing his time, and giving other persons trouble about fifty ill-made, bad going, dangerously vicious, or unsound animals, in succession. I should not want to be taught the precise diameter of every rope about a yacht; but it would be advisable in me to learn enough not to buy one for a party of

pleasure with a hole in her bottom, and immediately set sail, though it is possible that such a one, like some faulty horse, might be a good purchase after all: so if I knew enough to prevent my refusing such a vessel at once as useless, it might be to my advantage; but I think it would be just as well, and perhaps a little better, to take a ship carpenter to judge of the extent of the injury.

I trust the reader, from what has been written, now perfectly understands the intent of this work: having stated, therefore, what I conceive is meant by soundness, or its reverse, I will proceed to enumerate the common ailments that cause so much dispute, and will state how far I consider them as totally objectionable, or partially so: this, of course, will mostly depend on the stage, or extent of the ailment, be it what it may.

CHAP. II.

INTERNAL DISEASES OF THE HORSE. — INFLAMMATION OF THE LUNGS A GROUND FOR REJECTING A HORSE. — CHOLIC AND INFLAMMATION OF THE BOWELS, DITTO. — MEGRIM AND STAGGERS. — BLEEDING AT THE NOSE.

INTERNAL DISEASES.

FORTUNATELY for the animal, and equally fortunate for those who are large owners, the internal complaints to which horses are liable are few in number comparatively with those incidental to mankind. Were it otherwise, the mortality among animals of the brute creation would far exceed that of ourselves; for, however profound professional skill may be, the symptoms of some diseases bear so closely on each other, that we are indebted, in multitudes of cases, to speech that hidden complaints are not often confounded with each other. And here is a wonderful advantage the ordinary physician has over the veterinary practitioner. The latter, on seeing his patient in pain, can often only judge by the motions of the animal where the pain lies. The human patient not only informs us of this, but states

the description of pain, — whether confined to one particular part, or felt in different parts. We certainly are made aware, if a horse continually turns his head to his side or abdomen, that he suffers pain in the region of those parts; but it does not indicate the precise part of the anatomy affected: the veterinarian must therefore combine circumstances, and draw on his experience of other cases, in order to come to any certain definition of the disease in hand.

If a man feels pains in his side, no matter from what the pain originates, he naturally puts his hand on it; now, if he could *only* do that, I suspect that some of our ablest physicians would feel themselves often a little at a loss, and would find pocketing the fee much easier than to a certainty detecting the origin of the pain in many occult cases; and, with every respect for the profession, I am quite sure that, with a moderate knowledge of the human frame, a medical man could practise with greater success in a given round of cases than could the veterinarian. The only advantage the latter has is, that the complaints of his patients are not so varied; but then he has to contend with the serious difficulty of not being able to gain information from the subject of them.

The most dangerous, as being the most rapid, of all internal diseases of the horse is

INFLAMMATION OF THE LUNGS.

I do not quite say that I would advise the absolute rejection of a horse because he had been so afflicted, but I would most strenuously advise any ordinary purchaser not to buy one that had been recently affected without the advice of a veterinary surgeon; for it is a case requiring professional knowledge, if not a professional man, to judge how far there may exist any remains of the disease, for, unless the cure has been radical, and time allowed for tendency to inflammation to have subsided, should the animal be put to quick work, or even into hot stables, the chances are the disease will return in all its virulence.

If we are aware that a horse has had an attack of this disorder, from such treatment as we have no right to expect any lungs to bear with impunity, provided, and *only provided*, a very skilful professional man declared the complaint cured, and no symptoms remained, the purchase, I should say, might be made with tolerable safety; but if with fair and proper treatment this disease had come on, I should be very cautious in purchasing such a horse; still more so, if for racing or hunting purposes. If, with such treatment, he had been more than once attacked, I should say reject him *at once*, nor let any persuasion or representa-

tion alter this determination, for I should infer from the circumstance a predisposition to the complaint. With gentle work, proper feeding, proper medicine occasionally, and a proper atmosphere in the stable, it is quite possible no return *might* ever take place; but as no one is obliged to buy such a horse when there are so many others to *select* from, I should still say *reject* such a purchase, however free from disease he might be at the time.

It is quite true that a man, or a horse, may have a tendency to some particular ailment which may come on on any extraordinary occasion; yet such a man, or horse, may, in a general way, be able to fulfil his ordinary duties; the headach in man, to instance. But inflammation of the lungs or bowels in the horse are quite different affairs from headach in man. These complaints (I should rather call them attacks) are not mere matters to render the animal, in a temporary way, unequal to his duty: they are matters of life or death; the latter in a very few hours, unless the most skilful medical aid is at hand. This induces me to give such strenuous advice against purchasing a horse where we have the slightest reason to dread their attack. The much-dreaded cholera in man is not more rapid in its progress than is inflammation in the lungs or bowels of the horse: if not immediately attended to, two

hundred pounds would, in such a case, be reduced to as many pence in twelve hours. I can produce an instance.

On one occasion, a neighbour of mine came to me when, in dressing-gown and slippers, I was indulging in a cigar and glass of brandy punch, after a day's hunting. He begged me to go and see a favourite mule that had been ill since the preceding evening. I have no doubt she had been ill before he perceived it. I found her standing the picture of despair, and suffering under acute inflammation of the lungs. I was proceeding immediately to bleed her. This, however, he objected to: "She was weak enough already, poor creature, without being made weaker." Of course I pocketed my fleam and the affront together; but, feeling a little nettled at being disturbed in my half siesta to no purpose, I told him his mule would die, unless he got her immediate assistance. He promised to do so in the morning. "The morning!" said I, "she will be dead before the morning." This he would not believe; so, to punish him, I betted him a couple of pounds she was a dead one before my breakfast. In the morning I sent to know the result. She was taken much worse about two in the morning, and died in three hours afterwards.

I mention this anecdote, as one among many somewhat similar results I have witnessed of this

complaint, in the hope of convincing my reader that the advice I give on the subject arises not from theory, but ocular experience of facts; after which he will, of course, reject either my advice, or the horse I have alluded to, as he may think most proper. If he rejects the advice *and* the horse, it is all very well; but if he still feels inclined to select such a horse, I will still do him a good turn if I can: this is, to beg him, before he does so, to ask other and better advice before he concludes his purchase.

CHOLIC AND INFLAMMATION OF THE BOWELS.

Many horses are subject to the attack of these most dangerous and often fatal complaints. I class them under one head, because the first often ends in the latter, if not relieved in a short time.

I do not consider a horse subject to such attacks so objectionable as one subject to the complaint last spoken of, inasmuch as, by strict attention to the quality and quantity of food, and that given at proper times, we may all but insure his safety from them; whereas, though proper attention will probably prevent the former, still very great exertion may produce it, however careful we may be; therefore if his duty is such as to unavoidably produce great accelerated action

of the lungs, we must always be in fear of its effects on a favourite or valuable animal.

Cholic and inflammation of the bowels are usually produced by improper, that is, coarse or damaged, provender; but even good food, if given in too large quantities, is quite likely to produce the same result; and if given very soon before the horse is put to fast work, the chances are greatly against his escaping an attack, and more particularly so in hot weather. But as it is easy to guard against such improper treatment and its consequences, it would be in a general way our own fault if they recurred. Still, as in the former complaint, if it was ascertained that with proper treatment a horse was frequently attacked by cholic, I should say, as in the former case, reject him.

Absolute and determined inflammation of the bowels is not a complaint that a horse has a frequent recurrence of; but its precursor, cholic, many have frequently; and as that is likely to end in the latter dangerous attack, the horse subject to it is carefully to be avoided, provided it does not arise from treatment that can be altered.

One circumstance attendant on cholic renders it a very dangerous complaint. Most diseases of the horse are accompanied more or less by inflammation, and it is rather a nice point to determine in cases of cholic, how far inflammation

may have proceeded. The remedy for cholic, arising from repletion and distention of the abdomen and bowels, is simple, and generally both efficacious and certain. But if inflammation has taken place, what might be a very proper step to ease both in ordinary cases might not only be highly injudicious, but dangerous, to resort to in another stage of the disorder; for instance, where inflammation of the bowels had taken place, a dose of aloes would probably be death, and this in all probability a common farrier would administer, as they generally do, in very strong doses. A horse, therefore, thus attacked, and thus attended, would have but little chance of his life; and as we might be in situations where good professional advice could not be got, it is always a source of anxiety to have an animal subject to so precarious a complaint. The safe way is to *reject* him.

MEGRIM AND STAGGERS.

It is not my province or intention here to state the causes of complaints, but merely their effects, and consequently how *far* they are objectionable.

Neither megrim nor staggers are often fatal attacks, though very troublesome and sometimes dangerous ones to any one using a horse subject to them. But when staggers arise from a dis-

ordered stomach, it then becomes also dangerous to the animal, not merely as a disorder in itself, but from its origin.

There can be no doubt but strict attention to the state of the horse's stomach is a very great prevention of such attacks, for if simple megrim is caused by effusion of blood to the head and brain, that is wonderfully increased or diminished by the state of the stomach; and although many horses will have frequent attacks of megrim (let us do all we can to prevent it), if they were, under such circumstances, frequently so attacked, the recurrence would be much more frequent without such precaution, of course.

Harness horses are certainly much oftener attacked by megrim than riding ones, doubtless from the pressure of the collar. This in single harness is very objectionable; for though an attentive eye will generally detect the coming attack, it is sometimes too sudden to allow time to disengage the horse from the vehicle, and then a breakage of some sort may be anticipated.

There is one circumstance in this disorder greatly in our favour. Horses are seldom attacked with it when used by night; and some stage-coach horses, that would be certain to get megrims if driven by day, and particularly with the sun in their faces, will work in a night-coach without ever showing symptoms of the complaint.

I would never buy any horse for ordinary purposes so afflicted, however slight it might be.

I had a horse subject to something of this kind. Its cause or origin neither I nor any one else ever found out. He would, without showing any symptom of an attack, rush suddenly back in his stall, break his head collar shank, or, if that held, throw himself down in his stall. I then put him in a large loose box; here he would at times commence walking at his best pace round and round for an hour together, looking as wild as a hawk. He never, however, did more than this; and, singular to say, he was one of the best buggy horses I ever had, and I never knew an instance of his having any thing like an attack either in riding or driving him, not even in the hottest day: however, I *sold him*, so my reader will allow I give such advice as I should follow when I warn him against selecting a horse subject to such attacks.

BLEEDING AT THE NOSE.

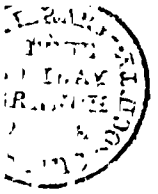
This complaint is much more frequent among thorough, or at all events very highly, bred horses than with those of a coarser character. Why it is so, arises principally, no doubt, from the nature of the exertions such horses are put to. It is not, however, improbable that the fineness of the blood-

vessels in high-bred horses may in some way contribute to the rupture of them when unusually distended, but I do not pretend to anatomical knowledge enough to say that it is so: be it so or not, it is exertion that brings it on. To what extent a liability to this casualty affects the value and utility of the animal, depends in great measure on the purposes for which he is intended. Great liability to this occurrence would reduce the value of a race-horse (that is, as one in training) from a thousand to perhaps a hundred; in fact, as a race-horse, be he as superior as he may, he would be comparatively worthless, as no dependence could be placed on him. With a steeple-chase horse it would be the same thing, and it is, I may say, also fatal to the value of a hunter. It can scarcely be called dangerous to the animal, as it seldom causes sufficient loss of blood to be more than a very temporary inconvenience.

A horse subject to bleeding at the nose when racing, or in long and fast bursts across country, might never have a recurrence of it if ridden as a park hack, as a ladies' horse, or in harness for moderate work. If, therefore, one subject to this casualty was particularly desirable in other respects, I should not object to purchase him for purposes of much less exertion than he had been accustomed to; but I would on no account buy him at any price, if I wanted him for the same

work as had brought on the occurrence, whether he was wanted for riding or driving purpose; though by using him very moderately we might prevent his being affected,—and if he was, a stoppage of our excursion would probably be the only inconvenience. If, however, the bleeding took place when in the dark, we might not perceive it, and a game horse would go on till he would drop. Then there would unquestionably arise danger to ourselves, and the very great loss of blood might produce considerable debility in the animal for some time; but, knowing the constitution of horses, and their inflammatory habit (fed and used as they are), I would rather have a favourite horse faint and drop from loss of blood, than have even a slight attack of internal inflammation. Weakness from loss of blood is easily and surely to be remedied, but inflammation is most difficult to be subdued.

There cannot be two opinions as to whether a horse addicted to bleeding at the nose is an unsound one; he is so, to all intents and purposes; but at a proper price he might be bought, and prove a valuable acquisition for many purposes, provided we can satisfy ourselves as to the extent of exertion he can bear with impunity: at all events he is not one I should positively reject.



CHAP. III.

PERMANENT DISEASES OF THE HORSE. — GLANDERS INCURABLE. — ILLUSTRATIVE ANECDOTE. — DEFECTIVE WIND. — CIRCUMSTANCES THAT SHOULD REGULATE THE ACCEPTATION OR REJECTION OF SUCH A HORSE. — ANECDOTE OF JOHN WARDE, ESQ. — DEFECTIVE WIND PRODUCTIVE OF DEBILITY. — THE AUTHOR'S ADVICE. — DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A BAD-WINDED AND A BROKEN-WINDED HORSE. — THE LATTER TO BE INSTANTLY REJECTED. — ROARING AND WHISTLING. — DEFECTIVE SIGHT. — USEFUL HINTS TO PURCHASERS. — CHINKED BACK.

THE complaints or casualties mentioned in the preceding chapter are the principal internal temporary attacks to which the horse is habitually liable; that is, they are such as come on suddenly, without previous indication of their recurrence, or without perhaps being attributable to any absolutely improper treatment at our hands. We will now turn our attention to a few others of a permanent nature, and then judge how far it might be judicious to purchase an animal under their influence. Under this head, as the most horrible and fatal, we will very briefly mention

GLANDERS.

I say briefly, because no respectable or sensible man would for a moment entertain an idea of

purchasing a horse so afflicted. A respectable man would reject him, knowing that, without setting at defiance all pretensions to honesty, he could never get rid of his bargain, but to a rogue or a slayer of horses: the sensible man would reject such a horse, knowing that in a confirmed state it is *incurable*, and in a recent one the cure is in all cases very slow and precarious. In its incipient form it has been cured, and no doubt will again be so. But there is no doubt that glanders of long standing is a perfectly hopeless case.

It is not my province to give a decided opinion on any professional matter that admits of doubt. We will not, therefore, go into the very abstruse definition of contagion, as relates to this frightful disease. That it is to be engendered by inoculation we know, whether by the lancet, or by the stomach having imbibed glandulous matter. It has also been clearly ascertained that sound horses have become affected by standing in the same stable with glandered ones, without it having come to our knowledge that inoculation of any sort had taken place. If this really was proved to have been the case, it would show that the disease was epidemic as well as contagious. These attributes, however they may be matters of consideration, and indeed of general importance, professionally considered, are not of any import so far as the extent of this work goes; for, be it con-

tagious or epidemic, a horse, however slightly affected, should be avoided as a pest-house.

A man has always, I conceive, a perfect right to mention any anecdote, when it only shows *his own* folly, ignorance, or presumption; and as I have stated that glanders recently contracted is sometimes curable, that the reader may place no *confidence* in a cure so very precarious and rare, I will state what occurred with myself.

I had a mule that in some way got glandered. I was quite sure of the disease being of very recent date, so I thought I would try my hand in attempting a cure. I put him where he could not come in contact with any living animal, and most patiently worked away at him for two months, injecting the nostrils, and supplying my patient most liberally with Ethiop's mineral every day. The discharge from the nostrils abated very considerably, and no blots or ulcers broke out on any part of the animal. When I found he rejected food, I stopped till the nausea went off; I then had at him again. I was silly enough to fancy I should make a cure, and so, for all I know, I might have done; there was, however, a circumstance occurred, that unfortunately prevented my coming forth "le huitième marveille du monde" as a Vet, namely, my mule most ungratefully *died*.

Now I must not permit my medical skill to be laughed at; for, on mentioning how I had treated

my patient to a very clever professional man, he said I had taken the right course. I learned from him what I did not at that time know, namely, that glanders is more virulent in mules than horses, and more so with asses than mules; so, in my mule case, I may apply what was once written by, or for, a doctor: —

"Whene'er my patients comes to I,
I physics, bleeds, and sweats 'em;
If, after that, they choose to die,
What's that to me — I Lets 'em."

There is one accompaniment to glanders that sometimes shows itself without the animal having the slightest tendency to the disease, namely, discharge from the nostrils. This discharge may exist to very considerable extent, having a most suspicious appearance, and fœtid smell; and many a horse has from this been killed for glanders, that was as clear of the disease as the person who killed him. Blows on the nose will occasion this discharge, or, indeed, any serious injury of the nasal cartilage. However, this must not be trusted to without the very best professional advice; and even then, if the opinion was ever so decidedly favourable, though it might and would induce me to keep a favourite horse under the prospect of cure, I most decidedly would reject a horse with such symptoms, however slight they might be, unless perfectly certain of the cause.

DEFECTIVE WIND.

There are so many gradations in this infirmity, that it would be going too far to say I would recommend every horse defective in his wind being at once rejected (though I would not purchase such a one for my personal use at any price). The acceptation or rejection of these horses should depend on the following contingencies: — how far the animal is affected, the work he is wanted to perform, the habits, taste, and pocket of the purchaser; or, if not the actual state of the pocket, the state of the inclination to part with its contents.

To the man to whom fifty or a hundred, more or less, is not a matter of serious consideration, I would at once say, reject any and every horse for any and every purpose, if he is *at all* defective in his wind. He may do the work wanted of him perfectly well, but still he is a make-shift; and, if all men thought as I do, a constant source of annoyance. The detested short cough, that more or less is habitual to bad winded horses, positively grates on my nerves. It is distressing to hear, and a certain nameless accompaniment to the cough, often places the rider in a most ludicrous predicament. "Figurez vous," as Sterne says, a man driving a lady with such a horse. The dreaded contrètemps takes place; the driver

wishes the horse and himself under the earth; when, to mend the matter, "hold hard," sings out some slang Cad,— thus making assurance doubly sure, that you are laughed at so long as you are in sight, and, still more direful consequence, never being permitted a sight of the lady again.

If, however, a man's poverty or parsimony induces him to put up with a most objectionable animal in order to get one whose appearance will gratify his pride at little cost, he may buy worse bargains than a horse moderately defective in wind. There is no danger at any rate to be anticipated from him, and he can do slow work without distress; and, I should say, continue it as long as other horses. He will stand a canter up Rotten Row; but beware of touching him with the spur, or starting very suddenly, for if you do, expect the abhorred "contrètemps." You may then clap your spurs to him in earnest, and hide your diminished head.

This reminds me of an anecdote of that capital sportsman, — capital, but somewhat eccentric fellow,—the late John Warde, Esq. He had a horse he wanted to get rid of from his being touched in his wind. A very spicy young gentleman, who had come from London for a day or two's hunting with the Hungerford Squire, heard of this horse, and called on Warde about him. Now this was precisely the kind of being Warde detested;

however, he received the gentleman civilly. "Mr. Warde," said the dandy, "I have heard a *report* of your horse."—"I dare say you have," interrupted the Squire, "and so have many other people." An uncontrollable burst of laughter, from some who heard the reply and knew the horse, so "discomforted" the gentleman, that before any apology could be made he walked off, and for that time the Squire lost the sale of his nag.

As a matter of course, the comparative ease or difficulty with which horses touched in their wind can accomplish their work, depends on how far the wind is affected, and the nature of the work required; it is quite certain that no horse faulty in his wind can perform fast work without considerable distress: still he may be in that state, that though it would render him unequivocally unsound and reduce his value (in trade phrase) seventy per cent., he might be able to perform moderate work, even at a fair pace, nearly as well as a sound one, if proper attention is paid to him as to diet, water, and an airy stable; the only case, therefore, where we could take upon ourselves to advise another person when to select (perhaps take would be a better term), or to reject, such a horse would be, when we saw how far the animal was affected, and then knew the circumstances and habits of the purchaser. An ordinary cob to carry an elderly man, who only rode

for air and health, would answer every purpose he was wanted for, if even considerably gone in his wind; and for such a person easiness of pace, safety, and steadiness, are of greater import than such lungs as are wanted in the hack to carry his master to a fixture twelve miles from Melton, where to such a man any defect of wind would render a horse perfectly useless. A horse that could not live a galloping stage in a Comet, Tally-ho, Tantivy, or Berkeley Hunt coach, would look well, work well, and do well drawing a Brougham, for the generality of persons, about London streets.

Allowing, as I do, that horses faulty in their wind are quite capable of doing many sorts of work pleasantly to the owner, and with comparative ease to themselves, my entertaining such insurmountable dislike to them may appear an incongruity. I am willing to have this prejudice set down as a description of monomania, if the reader pleases; but on or behind a bad winded horse I am in a continual fidget. Perhaps having all my life been used to very fast ones, as hunters, hacks, or harness horses, may account for it. Yet, unless when necessary, or sometimes, I allow, as a temporary bit of vanity, I do not want to go faster than any man accustomed to good goers usually does; but the feeling of having one, under or before me, that cannot get me out of another

man's dust if I want it, mortifies and worries me. Other persons more wise would not feel thus; therefore it would really be quite consistent in me, if I purchased for another person, or advised him to purchase, a horse that I would not accept as a gift. I might, and most certainly should, as I have often done, purchase one that in turn the same man would not accept on the same terms; yet both might be well suited in purchasing the respective horses.

I can, however, give a better reason for my dislike to thick-winded horses. Imperfection in the wind causes considerable debility; debility, as a matter of course, causes an animal under its influence to feel the effects of exertion more readily than one of a sound and firm constitution; thus, such an animal has not only his infirmity of wind to contend against, but comparative infirmity of constitution also. The asthmatic man becomes shortly distressed by exertion, supposing him to be as strong as he may; the sick and weak one becomes also distressed by exertion. What, then, must the man feel who is both asthmatic and weak? I do not know whether, in the human frame, the one is the sure accompaniment to the other; but in horses I am quite satisfied that more or less it is so.

The best advice I could give a person about to buy a thick-winded horse is this — *try him.* In

order to give him a fair chance, make sure his stomach is not distended by a recent quantity of hay and water, and then put him for half an hour to such work as you want him for. If he does this freely and without distress, buy him; if not, reject him at *any price.*

I must, however, apprise such a supposed purchaser, that, to form any accurate estimate of the animal's fitness for such work, it would be quite necessary to be satisfied how he had been treated, for at least a few days before his trial. For supposing, on one hand, he had been groomed, or rather tended, by an ignorant lout, he might have permitted the horse to eat as much hay and drink as much water as he pleased, which, with a bad-winded one, would be in considerable quantities, more particularly the water; such a horse might, therefore, be found much worse than he would be if properly treated; thus, in such a case, a useful animal might be rejected. Whereas, on the other hand, if, knowing the horse was to be tried, he had been kept for three or four days on wet oats and bran only, in very moderate quantities, no hay, and little or perhaps no water, he certainly would, in a temporary way, perform his trial with less distress than he would on even proper general feeding. Such treatment would enable the horse to breathe more freely than usual, it is true; but, if persevered in, would so reduce

his general stamina, as to incapacitate him for labour from other causes.

Broken-winded horses are always disposed to drink in greater quantities than others. They are always thirsty; they should therefore be watered much oftener than their healthy companions, though, on the aggregate, they should during the twenty-four hours get less. *All* their food should be given them wet; this, and never allowing them to suffer from thirst, will render them satisfied with as much liquid as it is judicious to give them, and habit will still do more in this particular. Fortunate is the man who has a groom that will abide by instructions as to the proper treatment of such horses as those in question.

The bad, or thick-winded and asthmatic horse, must not, however, be confounded with the broken-winded one; it is true even the latter are daily worked, but most decidedly never without severe distress to them. This is a horse I can hardly contemplate my reader looking at, even for cart purposes; if he should, I must most strongly advise him never to buy one so affected for any purpose. For though he might do what was required of him, no man of any feeling could witness, without regret, the efforts of an animal in pain and distress. Humanity ought to direct such afflicted animals to be shot as well as glandered ones. Why this is not done arises from

the general selfishness of man. The living glandered animal would affect the pocket by infecting other horses; the poor suffering broken-winded horse only suffers in his own person. Such are the feelings, despicable as they are, that actuate the generality of mankind, not only towards horses, but often to their fellow man also.

However thick-winded or asthmatic a horse may be, he is, in point of visible indication, widely different from the regular broken-winded one, and the latter from him. A regularly broken-winded horse may, if standing still, be detected nearly as far off as his colour is distinguishable. The peculiar jerk of the flanks in such a horse cannot be overlooked, even by those knowing the least of such matters. The animal, in strenuous endeavours to expel the compressed wind from his lungs, draws up the abdominal muscles in an unnatural degree; the elasticity of the lungs forces back these muscles with a sudden jerk, which is more or less forcible as the animal is more or less broken-winded. Thus, by watching the flanks of horses in this state, no mistake can possibly be made. This single symptom, or rather confirmation, of broken wind is sufficient; no professional opinion is requisite in such a case. Let such a horse be at once and for ever rejected.

ROARING AND WHISTLING.

Both the complaints are perfectly distinct from asthma and broken wind, though asthma is not unfrequently an accompaniment to them. When such is the case, of course the animal breathes with difficulty; this arising not from the roaring, but the asthmatic affection. If the lungs and all the parts are sound, I do not consider that, in a general way, roaring or whistling materially affects the breathing of the animal; and infer such to be the case from the fact that horses as roarers have raced, steeple-chased, and hunted, without evincing peculiar symptoms of distress. For this reason, should we find a horse a simple roarer, but with apparently sound lungs, I do not say such a one should be at once rejected, if the purchaser does not object to the (to me) abhorrent noise. In fact, there are many roarers that though they do make a very considerable noise on being galloped, will trot along eight or nine miles an hour without, in this particular, being objectionable. Such a horse, therefore, for such purposes as do not call forth the objectionable qualities of his infirmity, may safely be purchased; for the only drawback, beyond what is found at the time of purchase, is, that he may grow worse. This is, however, by no means to be feared as a certain result; in fact, there are causes of roaring that it is quite possible

may become less in their effect. To instance, suppose the roaring proceeded from some temporary affection of the glottis, sore throat, any enlargement or partial stoppage in the larynx; should such causes become abated, the roaring (if they *were* the causes of it) would abate. His getting better or worse, or remaining in the same state, will depend on the cause or causes of the complaint, varying in their degree, or remaining in the same force. Of the probability of a roarer getting worse or better, in a general way, no professional skill could warrant a decision; because, in a general way, the cause of the complaint cannot be decided on: in fact, even from what part the noise proceeds cannot always be ascertained. That it sometimes proceeds from, or rather is emitted through the nostrils, is quite clear; and, for this reason, persons may (if they have curiosity enough to look for such a thing) often see cab horses with a nose-band put on much lower than nose-bands usually are. When this is the case, the horse wearing it is a roarer. Inside this nose-band two thick pieces of leather or cork are affixed; these press on the air passage of the nostrils, and by so doing prevent, in a great measure, the escape of sound. Never having been blessed by the possession of more than two roaring horses, and but one of those bought for my personal use, I am not prepared to say whether this manœuvre would

in all cases be effective; though I should infer that it would be so, more or less, in most: for I conceive that from whatever part the noise proceeds, its emission is generally through the nostril, though I in no shape presume to affirm that it is so. Whistling and roaring I consider synonymous affections; the description of sound emitted alone creating the difference of epithets applied to the complaint. The wind roars, and the wind whistles; in both cases the sound of course proceeds from the wind blowing. The difference of sound being caused by the difference of the aperture through which the wind takes its course. I conceive something like this occasions the difference between whistling and roaring in the horse; and, taking this as something like fact, I consider that we are not to judge of the quantum of inconvenience the animal may experience by the quantum of noise he may make when in exertion. No question but the louder the sound he emits the worse roarer he is; but I do not hold that it follows, from this circumstance, he is a worse winded horse than one that is not so noisy: the greater or less portion of distress he feels arising, as I before said I conceived it to be, from the state of the primary organs of respiration. The question, therefore, as to the purchasing or rejecting a roarer simply merges into this: supposing we find that such a horse can do the work

we require without distress, how far a diminution of price will, in the purchaser's estimation, be an equivalent to the unpleasantness of the noise; and this must, of course, depend, be the noise little or much, on the turn of mind, or rather opinion, of the person purchasing; and is a point on which he alone can decide. If I have entered somewhat further than I at first intended on the nature of the disease, or peculiarity, it is the better to enable the purchaser to make his choice between selecting or rejecting a horse so circumstanced.

There is a modified kind of roaring that is very likely to mislead an inexperienced purchaser. This is termed grunting: not that horses keep up a continued grunt as the others do a roar, a wheese, or whistle, but only give a specimen of their habit (for it can scarcely be called complaint) when struck, turned round quickly in their stall, or on making some sudden exertion. I have known horses who would grunt on taking a leap, but on no other occasions; it therefore by no means follows that an animal making such a sound, or grunt, should be set down as a roarer, and rejected as such; for though most roarers will give forth a sudden emission of sound of some sort on sudden exertion, every horse doing so is not a roarer; and I have known instances where absolute roarers could not, without great difficulty, be forced to make any grunt on being tried in this

particular. Such instances are, however, very rare indeed.

There is, however, a very great difference in the sound emitted by the roarer and the grunter on sudden surprise or exertion, which a practised ear at once detects. The confirmed roarer gives a comparatively long continued hollow roar or groan. The grunter emits that sudden kind of grunt that a man would do if he came suddenly in contact with a post when walking; in fact, not very dissimilar to the sound emitted by paviors when using their large rammers in settling the street stones.

Although I apprise my reader that the mere grunter is not to be set down as a roarer, I in no way recommend his trusting to mere difference of sound in so important a particular. I only wish to prevent his at once refusing one that may be really an acquisition from suspicious indication: *try him.* If he does not roar or whistle on exertion out of the stable, his grunting on particular occasions when in, is not a matter of serious import; and he certainly may safely be purchased: the buyer, however, bearing in mind that he is, to a certain degree, possessing himself of a faulty animal, and one that he will find he must always sell at a depreciated price. If he buys him at such, it is only like purchasing a valuable looking mirror with a slight flaw in it at

twenty pounds, or a perfect one of the same class at forty; the one may, to the casual observer, look as well as the other, and will answer every purpose both of show and utility. If people are fastidious as to having a perfect mirror or a perfect horse, they will reject any flaw in either. The only difference however is, it is easy to get a perfect glass, but all but an impossibility to find a perfect horse; for the last I, personally, never look: though I do allow I *will* have them perfect as to wind, if they are, in stable phrase, "a little screwy" in other ways; but this is no guide to others. And I again repeat, that horses somewhat defective in their wind, roarers, whistlers, and grunters, may all be safely bought under particular circumstances.

There is still another noise that some horses occasionally make when going, and most particularly on first starting, and often for some miles afterwards. This is a kind of hollow sound, not unlike that we should hear if an half empty barrel was rolled backwards and forwards, it seems as if it came from the abdomen; but I have been assured by professional men that it proceeds from the sheath. Of the truth or fact of this I never could assure myself by listening ever so attentively, though I had two horses with that habit in its fullest degree; in fact, I never could quite convince myself where or whence it did arise: so,

doubtless, my informants are right. It is, however, no detriment to the horse, or need it be considered as calling for any diminution as to price; and, most certainly, they are not to be set down on the list with the rejected ones.

DEFECTIVE SIGHT.

This failing is one much more likely to be attended with both loss and personal danger to the purchaser than defective wind. My reason for saying this is, that defective sight in the horse, unless it arises from particular and recent causes, generally gets worse, and eventually ends in total blindness. This, of course, would produce loss; but worse than this, during its progressive state defective vision causes alarm and starting, often to a very dangerous degree; in fact, supposing the visionary organs to be seriously affected, the animal getting perfectly blind, renders him by far the safer and more desirable servant; for seeing enough not to run against a house is a very minor advantage; while seeing enough to be alarmed at most objects that present themselves is a most serious drawback. I would, therefore, recommend every horse being rejected whose eyes are in a fluctuating state, unless a professional man could decide upon its being of a transitory nature. A good blind horse is, for many purposes, a most

valuable animal. I have had several. When they habitually go straight, they are often particularly pleasant horses to drive, and a great many of them, for *road* use, remarkably pleasant to ride also. Two or three of the safest and best road hacks I ever had were stone blind. In fact, setting aside appearance, I should in no way object to put a lady on many blind horses. I would very much prefer such a one to another that shied: blind horses are almost invariably safe unless infirmity renders them otherwise; and have on an average better action. In reference to my observation as to their going straight, I make it because horses when they first become blind are timid and uncertain as to where to go; but when they get accustomed to be guided by the bit, learn to go with confidence straight on till some indication is given them to diverge from the straight line. I have generally also found blind horses light in the mouth. This I attribute to their being sensible they cannot trust to their own guidance, so are always ready to yield to that of the rider. I have also generally found them lively horses, arising no doubt from their apprehension of danger from their infirmity, which keeps them (unless of a determinate sluggish temperament) always on the *qui vive*; a kind of feeling, I consider, indispensable in a hack or buggy horse.

There is one peculiarity in blind horses for

which I never heard any one account in a decidedly satisfactory way; they are mostly fine-coated horses. The only plausible reason I can suggest for their being so is that possibly their apprehension keeping them, as I say, on the *qui vive*, also keeps them warmer in a general way than others, in fact, keeps up an increased insensible perspiration, conducive to a fine coat.

The healthy or reverse state of the visionary organs of the horse, is often a matter difficult for even professional skill to determine on, and is one that no other person, without great experience, should trust himself to decide upon. There is a description of dull, inanimate looking blue eye that might induce the non-professional or inexperienced man to set down as faulty, that is nevertheless a perfectly healthy one. This is frequently the case with what are technically called "beetle-browed" horses. And, again, there is a lustrous, quick eye that is deceptive in the other way. I have, in fact, more than once or twice seen an eye quite blind that looked like a perfect one. I once knew a cream-coloured, or wall-eyed, poney stone blind, that even on close inspection showed no symptom of blindness.

There are so many variations in the extent, causes, and effects of diseases of the eyes of horses, that I should far exceed the limit I have laid down for myself in this book, were I to attempt

to point them out. I should also be doing, or attempting to do, what I do not hold it to be my province to enlarge upon. I shall, therefore, merely add what I trust may be useful to some persons as hints when intending to purchase.

In whatever state a horse's eyes may be, if deviating from a healthy one, and it is ascertained that the imperfect state arises from his having had an attack of ophthalmia, let him be rejected at once; for the purchaser will find himself deceived, if he considers the state the horse may be then in to be a permanent one, or one that will become perfect. Making allowance for so sweeping an assertion, a horse is never radically cured of a severe attack of opthalmia, he may be partially so, and it is possible, but by no means probable, that the eyes may continue in that improved state. It is not unlikely that this might be the case, if the animal was always strictly kept to the same regimen, and subject to the same treatment that brought about the partial cure; but let him get to high feeding necessary to exertion, and let him undergo such exertion, the chances are ten to one he becomes as bad or perhaps worse than he ever had been; and if he is a delicate and weak constitutioned one on whom work takes great effect, I should say a return of the complaint would be certain; for this reason I recommend a horse in this state being rejected, that is, at anything bor-

dering on a sound price, — meaning the price that particular horse would be worth if sound, which most decidedly one in the state I have mentioned is not or ever will be.

There is a fluctuating state of the eyes, in old veterinary phrase, described as "moon-blind;" and I doubt not but many country horse doctors (not veterinary surgeons) would swear by that planet, that her influence brings about this fluctuation of sight. I conceive a more rational way of accounting for such horses seeing well at one time, and being nearly blind at another, is the effect of feeding, work, and air, each of which will effect certain states of the visionary organs. I knew a mare that would leave her stable to meet hounds, seeing, as far as could be ascertained to be the case, perfectly well, but would often return, after a severe run, all but stone blind. Now, I am quite satisfied, the moon was as innocent of this mare's blindness as of the death of the fox. The fact, no doubt, was, the exertion caused a suffusion of blood as regards the delicate vessels appertaining to the eye, some of which became highly inflamed or perhaps ruptured from distention. In corroboration of the opinion I venture to give, this same mare was afterwards put to moderate harness work, and at this she had no returns of temporary blindness.

Cataract is a complaint very common to the

eyes of horses, and hundreds are now being daily used for different purposes, whose owners have no suspicion of their being so affected; and though I should be sorry to make such owners uneasy, truth compels me to say, that the cataract, being so small as to escape casual inspection, is by no means to be held as any security of the lasting goodness of vision; quite the contrary. Now a good thumping cataract on one eye, completely obstructing its vision, is an honest fellow, though perhaps an unsightly one: there he is, and there he will remain, and can do no further harm; whereas slight cataracts on one or both eyes, though fair enough to look at, are very deceptive gentlemen indeed. Like the Siamese twins that act in concert, they are very likely to lead to total blindness in both eyes.

Horses that have suffered from opthalmia sometimes get cataract in one or both eyes. If this ends in total obscurity of vision in one eye, it is perhaps the very best ending of a bad affair; for we may then make tolerably sure of the safety of the other: indeed, a horse in this state may be purchased with great safety, and I should say that in the generality of cases the remaining eye would be even less liable to disease than it was before it lost its partner.

If we can ascertain that when cataract, I mean partial cataract, takes place in only one eye, it arose

from accident, such as a blow, that no inflammation exists, and that it is of some standing, I should not apprehend any great danger in purchasing such a horse, for if the affected eye remained in *statu quo*, it would not be of much consequence; and if it got worse, provided no inflammation accompanied its progress, it would not, in all probability, in any way affect the sound eye; and the sooner the disordered one became totally blind the better, for we might then consider all cause for apprehension over.

Little specks that "have nothing in the wide world to do with the horse's sight," are very well for sellers to talk about: we will say that they have not; but they often have a great deal to do in this wide world with a horse going eventually as blind as a bat. I have all due respect for many dealers in horses; but in a case of "small specks in the eye of no earthly consequence," I must allow I would quite as soon take the opinion of a clever professional man as theirs; and before buying a horse so circumstanced, I most strongly recommend my readers not to neglect to do so.

CHINKED BACK.

There are various affections of the back, or loins, of the horse, causing greater or less detriment to the powers of exertion. I do not think

it necessary to describe these different stages, or rather states, of injured back; but they range from a state in which the animal may be able still to perform light work, and that without pain to himself, to one that shortly terminates in death. In whatever stage of the injury any horse may be, I strongly recommend my readers to *reject* him *at once*, for I suppose myself addressing gentlemen in this work, or at all events respectable persons, and men of humanity. What certain classes of the community may choose to purchase, on a pound, shilling, and pence calculation of turning it to account at the expense of proper feeling, is quite another affair; for it may, and does often, pay to buy an afflicted animal and work him to death. From such revolting conduct and speculation we will turn away in disgust, and only consider what may or may not be purchased, with a proper regard to the animal and to ourselves.

I have said I would recommend the rejection of a horse in every stage of injured back, and yet have admitted he might be useful without pain to himself. Why I would in such a case reject him is, that if we are disposed or obliged to purchase at a diminished price, there are dozens of circumstances that would reduce price, that I should greatly prefer to an injury of the back. In the first place, the idea of sitting on an injured part

of the anatomy causes an unpleasant feeling to the rider (if feeling he has, and which I have no right to doubt); and further than this, there is, or at least should be, always an apprehension of any sudden strain or exertion, rendering bad ten times worse; and this most probably sooner or later would occur. It is by no means improbable, that, if galloping along ever so pleasantly on a horse at all injured in the back, a sudden jerk might occasion such intense agony to the animal, that he would roll over like a shot hare, and, by no means impossible, as dead as one, for the extent of the injury can only be surmised from external appearances, the acts of the animal when going, or, on the loins being pinched and pressed, to find the seat of the injury, and this is no test to be trusted to.

If we were aware that a horse had a simple strain of the muscles of the loins, severe though it might be, such a horse might be purchased with great hopes of a radical and perfect cure being effected, by proper treatment and length of time, and he might then be and continue as well as he was before the accident. If we had such a horse and liked him, there would be no necessity for parting with him: but even in this favourable state I should not advise such a one being bought; for some little hidden injury might still be there that might on a sudden come against him; and,

if this was seated in the vertebræ, the chances are that it would, and locked jaw and death be the result.

If the reader has in view any horse that he is aware is in some way injured in the back or loins, and is very desirous, notwithstanding this, to have him, I will make him as *au fait* as I can of the leading characteristic appearances that distinguish mere muscular strain from injury of the vertebræ. On pinching the loins, a horse affected in either way will crouch, evincing pain from the pressure; but see him trotted; if it is only a muscular affection, though he may go carefully so as to avoid all the motion he can of the muscles of the loins, he will still go straight, and the body will move connectedly; but if it is the spine that is injured, he will, if looked at from behind, rock in his gait, as we sometimes see a loaded stagecoach do. In fact, his hind quarters will sway from side to side, figuratively, like the tail of a kite; as if, like it, they were influenced by some power not belonging to the body; and so in point of fact they may be said to be; they seem actuated by the hind legs only. This distinguishing peculiarity cannot well be mistaken; and in the latter case I think my reader would not hesitate in his rejection.

Any injury of the back is of more consequence than many persons may imagine: it is true a horse may work with an injured spine, but a *little more*

is certain death. To show how soon this may occur to one uninjured previously, and to keep my reader from having any thing to do if he can help it with injured backs or loins, I will mention what occurred to a carriage-horse of a friend of mine.

Some acquaintance, possibly of an economic turn of mind, had persuaded my friend that drawing in his hay would be the best possible exercise for his carriage-horses. His coachman vowed he would not be a party to such an affair, so the horses were put into a carter's hands *pro tem.* In the evening my friend came to me in great tribulation about one of his horses, who he affirmed could scarcely stand. I went to his stable, and there saw the horse standing with his hind legs stretched out, his eyes glazed, and a fixed look, that showed me something serious had occurred. I touched the horse to make him move; he did so, and in doing it he gave a groan of perfect agony, and fell against the standing: of course I saw directly what was the matter. What is to be done? inquired my friend. Nothing can be done, said I; he has fatally injured the spine. And what will be the result? said he. In all probability, said I, paralysis of the hind parts, very likely locked jaw, and I have no doubt death in a few hours; but send for Mr. ——, a professional person some miles off.

If, however, the horse belonged to me, I should shoot him instanter. The poor animal, however, did not trouble either the veterinarian to prescribe for him, or his master to destroy him. An hour afterwards, after uttering a horrible kind of shriek of agony, his hind parts fell under him like a dog sitting, he rolled on his side and died.

No doubt, from not being accustomed to hold back a loaded cart, he had slipped, and so far injured the vertebræ that some motion afterwards completed the dislocation; for had it happened all at once he would have fallen in the shafts.

A constant fear of something occurring to bring on injury of the back to its climax, induces me so strongly to object to horses thus affected. I trust my reader will think my objection well founded.

There are many horses that always crouch more or less on being first mounted, and some that will do so on the spine being pinched with the fingers, that cannot be called unsound, or ever show any other indication of injury to the part. I do not say such a horse need be rejected; I do not say I would not buy one having this peculiarity; but I most certainly do say, I should never be perfectly easy about him, unless I knew he had frequently been wrung by bad fitting or badly stuffed saddles; which we can scarcely suppose would be the fact if he belonged to gentlemen, though such

is sometimes the case; if he has been used by inferior persons, it is very often so, the crouching is then accounted for. It is, however, under any circumstances a very disagreeable and, I consider, objectionable habit in any horse; and I cannot persuade myself but that, in the generality of cases, though after a few minutes we may perceive no more of it, the crouching is caused by pain for the time being; nor can we be certain that all pain ceases when the crouching does so, though it may not be sufficiently acute to induce the animal to give outward demonstrations of it; in fact, such a horse being able to gallop well, or even jump well, is no proof of either being done without a certain degree of suffering; for this reason I would not (in a general way) buy a horse with such a habit. I will here mention a circumstance that perhaps encreased my habitual prejudice against such horses.

My father bought a remarkably fine mare of a relation (who never hunted), intending to make a hunter of her; this mare crouched on being mounted to a degree that was perfectly ridiculous to look at; however, in the course of a few hundred yards it went off, and there was no other indication of any weakness of the back or loins. She was a remarkably pleasant road mare and charger, for both of which purposes she had been used; but as a hunter she was not worth the

saddle she carried. She would gallop and leap very cleverly for a brust of ten minutes; but after that she tired at once, nor would she recover that day. She was tried a few times, always with the same result. She was sent to Tattersall's. I often afterwards saw her in the Park; there she was at home, and there, like many other impositions on the public, looked a personage of great consequence. I have no doubt, in this case, the crouching was the effect of some latent injury to the back or loins, and this it was that tired her when put to continued strong exertion.

"It is of no consequence," or "He feels no pain from it," are opinions very prevalent with many owners as regards their horses; and these opinions are often strenuously maintained without being able to bring forward one good reason in support of them; the horse no doubt would, if he could, tell a different story. They do not *pretend* to be ill, lame, or in pain, from affectation or cowardice. As a case in point:

A friend of mine once told me that a favourite horse had contracted a habit, within a few weeks, of always putting one foot forwards; he was "not lame or in any pain:" was it not *odd?* Not particularly so, said I; and there it ended. A day or two afterwards I called on my friend, and was shown the horse. There he was, sure enough, nursing this favourite foot or leg under the

manger, and occasionally holding it up. I fully thought that for a horse "not in pain," these manœuvres would be very *odd* indeed. I took up the foot, felt it, the inside quarter was as hot as fire. Pray, said I, has this horse ever told you he is not in pain? Of course not, said my friend. Then, said I, I tell you for him that he is. But, replied he, if he was in pain he would go lame. I dare say he does, said I, if the truth was known. But, said my friend, I tell you he does not. Very well, rejoined I, have patience and you will soon tell me he does. In three or four days he was lame enough, and in as many more a quitter burst out.

CHAP. IV.

EXTERNAL IMPERFECTIONS, *continued.* — AILMENTS OF THE LIMBS AND FEET. — "DOWN ON THE HIP." — STRING-HALT. — SWOLLEN OR CAPPED HOCKS. — SWELLINGS IN THE NECK. — WINDGALLS. — CROOKED FORE LEGS. — KNUCKLING OVER ON THE HIND POSTERNS. — AILMENTS COMMON TO THE HIND LEGS. — BONE, BLOOD, OR BOG SPAVINS. — THOROUGH PINS. — SPLINTS. — AILMENTS OF THE FORE LEGS. — RING BONES AND SIDE BONES. — CONTRACTED FEET. — SINEWS. — CORNS. — CURBS. — "UNNERVED."

I HAVE now mentioned as many corporeal ailments of the horse as are necessary to this book; for where there is any unusual or hidden disease from which a horse evidently suffers, I take it for granted no man would purchase him for immediate use, and but few for any purpose. It is bad enough to have a horse get decidedly amiss when in our possession; but to meet trouble half way, which purchasing an ailing horse decidedly is, would be little short of madness. A known and long-standing imperfection may be tolerated; but one in its progress, or in a fluctuating state, it is the height of folly to encounter. We will now descend to —

AILMENTS OF THE LIMBS AND FEET.

As that part of the limb most connected with the body we will take the hip-joint; not as to whether a horse may or may not be purchased if *lame* in this part, for such a question would answer itself; but there is a deformity sometimes existing here, arising at times from outward formation but in most cases from injury to the part. This, in stable phrase, is termed "down on the hip."

On standing behind some horses an evident depression of one hip may be perceived. If of long standing, and the horse has been at work, and has always been sound, it is most probable he will ever continue so at the same kind of labour, or perhaps at any other; if, therefore, the deformity is not more unsightly than the purchaser can put up with, and the price is a temptation, such a horse may safely be purchased. Indeed, for double harness, where the deformity may be hid by driving him with that side next the pole, I should be greatly tempted to take a fine horse at a proper reduced price. And, in fact, in many horses considerably down on one hip, the objection is scarcely visible when standing by their side; it is only by scrutinising both hips at once on standing behind that it becomes apparent. It is perhaps as safe a drawback on being perfect as any I know of in the horse.

In continuance of imperfections that are in a general way as harmless as any imperfections can be, I will now mention

STRING-HALT.

In the ordinary run of cases of string-halt, a buyer need not be alarmed on seeing a horse thus affected. Its origin or cause admits of different opinions even among the professional; it would, therefore, be great arrogance in me to give any opinion of my own on the subject. I have heard it accounted for, however, by some persons in so very extraordinary a way, that I feel quite confident such opinions were in most cases quite erroneous. This much I may admit, — I consider those who attribute the motion to some affection of the hock or stifle, or in some of the muscles or ligaments necessary to its play, form their opinion on good grounds. What the affection may be, we will not enter into here. This much, however, we may infer, — if the horse is not lame in or after work, let the cause be what it will, it most probably is not a serious one; nor need we fear its getting worse, or at all events not suddenly so; nor do I believe that in a general way, the extent of the peculiarity of motion, that is, the more or less snatching up the limb, has anything to do with the animal getting

lame or continuing sound, for I have seen numbers of horses thus affected to the utmost extent always remaining perfectly sound; in fact, I venture an opinion, that a horse afflicted by string-halt is sound or unsound, not from the extent of the affection itself, but from circumstances accompanying the affection. If, on examining the limbs, we found a difference in them, and that difference of a nature that has any tendency to produce lameness or eventually lead to it, I should say such a horse could in no way be considered sound, though sound at that time; but if on looking at and feeling the limbs we could perceive no difference in them, and both being what they ought to be, I should consider the animal a sound one notwithstanding his string-halt. That some departure from the usual organisation of the different parts that create unison of motion does exist, we must consider certain; but this difference of texture, or formation, of hidden parts may in no way render the leg affected one atom less sound or less efficient than the other. I will endeavour to elucidate what I mean by a supposed case.

We all know that some horses lift their fore or hind legs, or all of them, much higher than others do, and that not from the effect of peculiar breaking, or teaching, but naturally; this, of course, proceeds from some natural cause, in no way

relating to soundness or its reverse. If we, therefore, suppose a horse to have three legs in every way constituted like those of the horse who does not possess high action, but the fourth endowed with those attributes that cause high action, he would be set down as having string-halt; and so in fact he would have; that is, he lifts one leg higher than the others, but all might be equally sound. If both hind legs were thus formed or constituted we should then say he had string-halt in both, and so virtually he would have.

On these premises, therefore, without diving into (as it appears to me) the abstruse opinion that string-halt has its origin in an affection of the vertebræ, I venture to say, that, in the absence of any defective indication in the limb, a horse with string-halt may very safely be purchased.

Another peculiarity, or rather deformity, for I cannot call it a disease, is often seen in horses; namely, —

SWOLLEN OR CAPPED HOCKS.

I have never known a horse lame from this, though it is often very unsightly. It certainly proceeds from injury sustained on the part showing the enlargement; but, fortunately, though such injury produces a blemish, it rarely produces any

lasting ailment; probably, at first, it may cause a little soreness and stiffness, as a blow will on any part of the anatomy. This shortly goes off, and no imperfection beyond the blemish arises from it. It is particularly objectionable, in point of sale, to a harness horse, as it carries suspicion with it that the injury to the part arose from kicking. In fact, we seldom see an old offender as a kicker without capped hocks; but, beyond this, there is no reason that such a horse should be rejected at a proper price; for it is one of those few cases where a purchaser may credit the seller in saying "it is of no earthly consequence."

We sometimes see a swelling of the same kind, and arising from the same cause, namely, a blow, on the front of the knee. A blow on this part is certainly likely to create longer injury and stiffness than when inflicted on the hock; for this reason,—there is less springy substance to soften its effect. I might make something like a comparison of these two parts with our heel and knee-pan. A *very* severe blow on the knee of the horse would very possibly end in anchylosis, or stiff joint; if, however, it does not, and the horse becomes sound, it rarely comes against him afterwards, though it will sometimes cause a little temporary stiffness after severe exertion; still I should not reject a known good horse for such an imperfection. If, with a swollen knee of some

standing, he had stood work without its causing any lameness in the part, I should say a man would be quite justified in warranting him sound, and a purchaser quite safe in buying.

Being on the subject of outwardly visible blemishes, I beg to be permitted to return to the upper parts of the horse in order to mention

SWELLINGS IN THE NECK, OR RATHER THE SIDE OF IT.

These puffy swellings generally arise from the horse having been bled by rude hands; and further, by the very bad practice some grooms have of pulling up the skin, or rather pulling it away from the neck, when preparing to pin it up, and also from the equally to be reprobated habit, after the neck is pinned up, of, as it were, forcing the pinned-up part into the neck with the sponge, indeed sometimes with the finger. The pulling the skin away from the neck allows wind, to a certain degree, to get admission; and there it remains, producing a kind of air bladder; and forcing the pin, with the tow round it, towards the neck, bruises the part, and often causes swelling also. A total loss of the vein is not unfrequently an accompaniment to swelled neck, produced by such rude practitioners cutting through it, for they seldom take much trouble

in the selection of a fleam, in accordance with the fineness or thickness of skin of the animal to be bled, or make any difference in the force of the blow whether they were to bleed a rhinoceros or a thorough-bred filly. The width of the blade matters little, but the depth of it is of serious importance; if with a deep blade, and that not held accurately in a line with the vein, a strong blow is given, the vein will be separated to a certainty.

Should, however, such a catastrophe take place it is not often of as serious importance as may be supposed; for, after a short time, it is found the perfect vein is quite adequate to perform its double duty.

I do not think it improbable that a very plethoric full-habited horse might at times sustain some inconvenience from the loss of one of the blood channels; but with others I never heard that such was the case: that it might not be so, is probably why the two veins were given.

In continuance of blemishes of this sort,

WINDGALLS

are the next that suggest themselves. These are to be found more or less on most horses that have been at work; but, though doubtless arising from the effect of work of some sort, they are in themselves perfectly harmless. When a horse showing

windgalls is lame, it is in nineteen cases out of twenty the cause of these tumours, swellings, or, in veterinary phrase, *bursæ*, that lames; not the windgalls themselves,—they do not contain wind, as the epithet would imply, but a fluid, the nature of which, or its use, is of little importance to the reader to be informed; nor is such information relative to diseases contemplated in this work. Where I do attempt it, it is only intended to enable the reader to judge of the probable consequences of any departure from a perfect state in the horse, by the origin and nature of it.

If windgalls were so distended by the fluid they contain as to become inflamed from the distention, they might occasion lameness; but this is very rarely the case. They may be relieved in a temporary way, but are not curable permanently; it would be indeed folly to attempt it, as in their usual way they do little or no harm, whereas an attempt at cure might be attended with danger. All horses sooner or later will show indications of work; if these are confined to windgalls, both horse and owner are very fortunate. Such a horse may be purchased without hesitation.

CROOKED FORE LEGS, OR STANDING OVER AT THE KNEE.

This may be termed a deformity, for, though it mostly arises from work, it is the natural formation of some few horses.

Supposing even that it arises from the effect of work, it has nothing whatever to do with unsoundness. Such horses are just as sound as if their legs stood in a proper position; that is, so far as their mere departure from straightness goes. In fact it is quite common to see such legs particularly clean in their sinews, and most determinately sound: nor does it at all follow that such legs have undergone any unusual degree of labour; in fact, the state of a horse's legs in any way is at best but a very fallacious way of judging of the quantum of work he has undergone; but it is a very sure criterion of the effect work has had on him, be it more or less. The consequence or effect (not the quantum) of work a horse has done is the important point.

Many persons run away with, or are carried away by, strange notions and fears respecting horses having done a good deal of work. In the hope of inducing them to think more justly in this matter, I will suppose a mail-coach to set out with a set of wheels new, or newly tired; and we will say that, from some cause or other, the

two wheels on one side are tired with bad, soft, and badly worked iron; the other two made of the best material, and thoroughly well hammered. After a few journeys we will look at the wheels, we shall find the first two worn down to the fellies, the others fit to go the same number of miles again.

Horses' legs are not made of iron it is true, nor are they hammered in their manufacture, though hammered enough after they are made; but they are made of a material or materials, and on the goodness of these, and the way in which nature has put them together, mainly depends one horse being fresh on his legs, while another is stale or lame, though each horse performed the same service, and each had the same care.

I have remarked that, on the average, crooked legged horses are mostly pretty good goers; that is, have good action. I do not of course mean to infer that crooked legs produce the action; but I consider the action produces crooked legs, and if it produces nothing worse, such a horse, though he may have done much duty, will in all probability do as much more. Such legs are a little unsightly when standing still, we must allow; but they can go.

If the horse naturally stands over at his knees, I do not believe he will become from work at all more so than any other; perhaps he is less

likely to do so, as the position of such a leg takes off in a very great degree tension on the sinews, and such horses rarely, in stable phrase, "break down."

A horse with naturally somewhat bent knees is for service greatly to be preferred to the one whose knee inclines backwards. Indeed, if I had a colt with knees standing in the latter way, however promising or however highly bred he might be, I would sell him for harness, for, as a race-horse or hunter, I should have no more confidence in him than if his legs were made of deal. If I was shown such a colt for riding purposes, I should not look at him twice, and, though sound, I would *reject* him at once at *any price;* even for harness I should dislike him.

In looking at a crooked-legged horse, the purchaser need never be deceived as to whether the mode of standing proceeds from natural formation or work: if natural, it is impossible for the horse to put it straight, for nature does not make *yielding* crooked knees. When they have a tremulous motion, and *can* be put straight, they are in that state from the effect of work: therefore, on being assured the horse "was foaled so," let the buyer hold up one of the fore legs; if naturally crooked, crooked the one he rests on will and must remain; if, on the contrary, the leg he

rests on becomes straight, there can be no doubt but work, not nature, has made them crooked.

I certainly do not consider that, speaking generally, horses standing trembling on their knees are safe to ride, — not from their crookedness, but from their trembling; yet this, like most other things, has its exceptions, and many horses standing thus are quite safe.

If the reader does not object to the appearance of crooked or bent knees, whether natural or arising from work, he need not hesitate in making the purchase from any apprehension of lameness or unfitness for any task.

KNUCKLING OVER ON THE HIND POSTERNS.

I never heard of this unsightly peculiarity being natural, nor ever saw an unworked colt standing thus on the hind joints. It always proceeds from work, though possibly that work may not have been severe. It is an objection that to me is paramount. It is no absolute injury to the horse, nor is it of itself a source of lameness; still it is so unsightly, and confers so decidedly a mean appearance on the animal, that I positively would not accept one so circumstanced as a present (that is, not to use). This want of flexibility on the posterns often, indeed generally, goes off after the horse has been some short time at

exercise; but it is so disgusting to me on first mounting, that, much as I prize qualifications, the best even of these would not compensate for the deformity. Those, however, who have not so rooted an antipathy to it, may with perfect safety buy a horse standing thus, so far as any fear of lameness is concerned. I must at the same time give it as an opinion, that such horses are not likely to have the same elasticity in their canter or in leaping as others; they probably may have when thoroughly warmed; but, not having had practical experience in such horses, I am not prepared to say how far this may or may not be the case, and I have no wish to become better acquainted with them. They are a sort that may be selected or rejected, as the purchaser pleases to decide.

I know of no other deformity very common to the horse, though there are several that we may occasionally meet with; we will therefore now consider such ailments of the limbs as, in certain stages, are likely to occasion immediate or ultimate lameness or infirmity, or may probably remain in a state of lasting imperfection, but still of utility.

Having last mentioned the hind legs, we will look at the ailments most common to them, which are — bone, bog, and blood spavins, thorough-pins, and curbs. At the head of these, as the worst in effect, we will consider the —

BONE SPAVIN.

Seeing as many horses as we do in daily use showing spavins, we might be led to imagine that they are not of as serious consequence as they are. Their consequence, so far as laming the animal is concerned, depends of course greatly on their nature, and equally so on their situation on the limb. We must not, therefore, take the size of its appearance, as any sure criterion whereby to judge of how far it is likely to produce either pain or lameness, for it will at once strike the reader that an excrescence on or in the neighbourhood of a joint may be very unsightly and serious in appearance, yet if it is so situated as not to interfere with the motion of that joint, would cause very little inconvenience to the animal; whereas any ossification, however small it may be, if so placed as to interfere with the necessary action of any of the machinery forming the joint, or with the junction or unity of action of two bones, must as necessarily impede, partially or totally stop, their action as would an impediment placed in the machinery of a mill, or any engine whose efficacy depends on the corresponding working of component parts.

There is one cause of spavin, and perhaps the very worst of its kind, arising from a circumstance that, in one respect, shows the machinery of

the hock may be impeded by the same kind of occurrence, or rather want, that would in like manner act on machinery of man's manufacture, namely the want of a proper lubricating fluid, to enable the joints to work without detrimental friction. Art supplies oil or some other proper mixture to manufactured machinery; nature supplies a description of oil to the joints of the animal. Whence this fluid is generated, or by what supplied, it is not our business here to enter on; suffice it to say, that sometimes from over exertion this fluid no longer exists in sufficient quantity to prevent friction of the uniting parts acting in junction. Irritation from the friction of these parts against each other produces intolerable pain to the animal, with the worst possible sort of lameness; a lameness that no skill, no treatment, no operation, can beneficially affect; it is *absolutely incurable.*

Another kind of bone spavin proceeds from a bony, or in other terms, ossific deposit, which forms a junction of the small bones, of course preventing the freedom of their action; and though the motion required of these small bones is not much, still the total or partial prevention of that action more or less lames, though not often to any very serious extent, but quite enough I should say to induce a purchaser to reject a horse so circumstanced. With the latter kind of spavin

a harness horse will work well enough in a general way, and probably after going some time he feels but little pain; but its influence on the elasticity of the hock is of the utmost importance, in a detrimental way, to a horse for the saddle. Blistering or firing, as the case may require, will generally so far cure ordinary bone spavin of the last description as to prevent his going lame or afterwards becoming so; but in this case even, I only can call the failing *mended*, for it certainly is not cured, though the lameness may be so. I say *mended only*, because the cure is somewhat similar in effect to the mending a broken or splintered lance-wood gig shaft by splicing to it a stiff piece of wood or iron. The shaft is certainly mended, rendered safe, useable, and as strong as ever, but its elasticity, on which depends its chief merit, is for ever gone; and this, in a minor degree, is the effect that mending a spavined hock has on its motion; though if spavin is taken in hand as soon as it is perceived, and before stiffness of the hock takes place, the horse may then be nearly or quite as well as he ever was; but the severest of operations will not restore elasticity, if it has once been destroyed.

The inducement, therefore, to select or reject a horse that has (in my new term) been mended for bone spavin, would, I should consider, rest on whether he went with proper elasticity on

his hocks, and of course on his going quite sound; if he does both, he may safely be purchased, for after having been properly fired, the disease seldom gets worse, or comes against him; that is, if the spavin was of a description in which firing could take effect. This may, in fact, be decided on by the horse going sound, for if the complaint was not of this kind, firing would take no effect as relates to the lameness it occasioned, or, indeed, as to the complaint itself.

Another description of spavin frequently shows itself on the hock: indeed, fortunately much more commonly than those above mentioned, for it seldom lames to any great degree; this is the

BLOOD, OR BOG SPAVIN.

There is a professional difference between these complaints, but that difference is so slight, and the effect of both so similar, that it would be quite useless to enter on the subject here; suffice it, for our present purpose, that blood or bog spavin is a comparatively soft swelling on the inside front of the hock. This is not, however, caused, as the term blood would imply, by any accumulation of blood, but of a fluid technically termed sinovia, or, in farrier phrase, joint oil. Exertion causes an undue secretion of this fluid; this causes a distention of the ligament of the

hock. I have seen horses with so great an accumulation of this fluid as to impede the motion of the hock; in fact, I had a buggy horse so situated. He had blood spavins when I purchased him; but, after driving him twelve months, always going sound, the enlargement increased in a few days to an enormous size, and he was dead lame. I had seen an instance of a horse operated upon for a similar ailment by a practitioner at Hounslow, with complete success. To him I sent my horse. He opened the tumour and let out its contents; in twenty-four hours my horse went quite sound, and in a few days I had him at work. Nor did he get lame again during the time I had him, though often in strong work, for he was a trotter.

I believe letting the superabundant fluid escape is the only remedy in a bad case of blood spavin, though not so often practised as it might be. I certainly would not subject a horse to be thus operated upon by a common farrier, nor would he attempt it; doubtless he would fire the part. He might with as much reason and chance of success fire the horse's abdomen, if he had distended it by an improper quantity of provender. In fact, one of the objects, and in many cases the chief object, in firing, is to produce tension on the part fired; so, by firing for blood or bog spavin, we should increase the effect of the

44812

distention, and, I should say, most probably increase the lameness by so doing.

THOROUGH PINS.

When we see tumours or distention on both sides of the hock, it is thorough pin. This enlargement can be pressed so as to appear to run through the hock, which in fact its contents do, and so far "thorough" is a very proper term; but what "pin" has to do with it I know not, but so it is called. This double or twofold bursæ is, I should conceive (without venturing to set it down as the case), less likely to produce lameness than when the swelling is on one side only, going on the supposition that the accumulated fluid has more room to flow in; for I have never felt a thorough pin so tense as I have a blood spavin. In fact, thorough pins very rarely materially inconvenience the horse, nor would I reject a clever one that had them, and was sound; sound he could not be warranted, but sound he nevertheless might be, and in most cases would be.

SPLINTS.

The evil or harmlessness of these, so far as relates to any lasting lameness, depends, I think I may say wholly, on their situation on the leg. Most splints, while in a growing state, usually more or less produce lameness for the time being;

this in many cases does not proceed from their pressure on any sensitive part lying beneath them, but from distention of one of the surfaces (if I may use such a term) that covers them (the Periosteum), in short, one of the skins. This is a very fine, and, I believe, inelastic coating covering the shank-bone; if, therefore, any protuberance on that bone is produced, its pressure on this covering substance produces pain, irritation, and lameness. If the lameness arises solely from this pressure, rest and cold lotions will usually alleviate the irritation. The coating, or, in professional phrase, the periosteum, becomes habituated, or accommodates itself, to the distention, and then the horse feels no further inconvenience from it. I feel some confidence in venturing the opinion or ideas I have on this point from the following facts.

Even as a boy I was addicted to dabbling a little in professional and anatomical subjects, and was a good customer to horse-slayers for legs, feet, and other parts of the horse's frame; so much so, that if they killed a horse with any rather unusual appearance existing in or on any part of the anatomy, that part was generally sent to me to be exchanged for a half crown and a lunch to the man who brought it.

Having at this early age a favourite horse that had become lame in the middle of the hunting season from a splint, I found, on examining the

leg, that the excrescence was seated precisely on the cannon bone, about midway, and neither pressed on the sinew, which, though much talked about, it seldom or ever does, or on the smaller bones of the leg; this satisfied me they were not inconvenienced by the splint. I found the leg in its immediate neighbourhood hot as fire, and the covering skins tense as a drum-head; it then struck me, that this tightening or distention produced the hurt and lameness. The enlargement being situated on the shank-bone only, I concluded I could do no great injury there, so I passed a penknife straight along the splint, from its commencement to its termination, quite through the skins; kept cold fomentations to the part, gave my patient a dose of physic, and in a fortnight he was going with hounds sound. I afterwards did the same thing to several horses belonging to acquaintances with the same results; it left certainly a lasting blemish, but not of any great extent.

The same thing has been often done since, and probably long before, by many professional men, and not of course being done in so rude a manner, but artistically, doubtless the blemish left is far less when performed by them; but it so happens that I have never, to my knowledge, seen a horse thus properly operated on.

The reader must not, however, infer from what I have stated, that splints are always of so little

import as that the possession of a pen-knife presents a certain mode of cure; for it is only when it is circumstanced as I have described, that this simple operation will have any effect, or at all events produce any thing like a cure: for, if a splint is so situated as to interfere with the action of the knee; the horse must be lame unless such interference can be removed; if it arises from ossification that has taken place, embracing, and in fact cementing together, the large and two smaller bones, splint then becomes as serious, and I believe generally as incurable a lameness, as any incidental to the horse; for, though there is no motion or movement in the cannon bone, there is in the small ones; consequently, if they become attached, their motion is lost.

I have found it necessary to go somewhat further into the causes, effects, and different natures of some of the ailments of the horse, than I anticipated would be the case when I commenced this work; but the object of it not being to tell the reader what are the failings of horses, and to reject all horses possessing such, but, on the contrary, to tell him to the best of my judgment when he may buy an *imperfect* animal, it becomes necessary to point out the different consequences of different failings, be they of what nature they may, and then to leave it to his own judgment to select or reject as he may think proper.

Thus, in the case of splints, it is not that it would be judicious or injudicious to purchase a horse having a splint or splints, but whether it would be advisable or its reverse to buy one with such or such a description of splint; and the same thing holds good in respect of most of the failings of the animal.

There are two more ailments principally restricted to the fore legs, that, taking them on the whole, are such as I consider to be of a nature to warrant an immediate rejection of the horse under their influence. These are

RING BONES AND SIDE BONES.

These are both ossifications of parts, the first of the soft part above the hoof, where the hair joins it, the other of the cartilages on each side of the foot. The latter, in professional phrase, ossified cartilages, we need describe either no further or more artistically. It is enough to say that when once ossification of these parts has taken place, the disease is incurable. The horse may work and be useful; but if a man wishes to possess a pleasant-going animal, which I conclude my reader does, to him a horse so circumstanced would be useless. All (or nearly all, as the case may be) elasticity of the parts is lost; the horse will never get better, but most probably worse, till total

infirmity ensues. This induces me to advise unqualified rejection of such a horse. In support of such advice, —

A friend of mine purchased a remarkably fine grey horse, that had been driven in a carriage for some time. He was sold from not quite matching his companion. He had ring bones, but went sound. My friend tried him with hounds, and found him quite at home there. Living in a very soft country, and seldom having far to ride to or from hounds, the horse remained sound till near the end of the season. He then went for a fortnight to hunt with another pack; the second time he rode the horse the ground had got hard, and it happened there was a good deal of road riding during the day. The horse showed considerable lameness returning from the hunt; he was a cripple the next morning, could never be mounted afterwards, or was worth one shilling. Concussion no doubt, as the general cause, had originally produced ring bones in this truly good horse, and concussion finished his career. Ossified cartilages of the feet are produced from the same cause, and suffer from wanting elasticity of parts to counteract its effects.

CONTRACTED FEET.

So much has been written on such complaints, that it is needless to say more, either on their

origin or effects; they are bad enough, but not so likely to suddenly cripple a horse as the last-mentioned ailments. If we ascertain, by the outward indications the animal can afford us, that they are not so contracted as to cause suffering, and he goes sound, or nearly so, I would not at once reject a horse under proper circumstances with such feet. As a hunter, he may go pleasantly and safely, and with attention will very possibly never get worse. Sound he never will be; still, if more attention is paid to his feet than they had been accustomed to, they may, and probably will be better than they were under former and less judicious management: but, as contracted feet are (by way of simile) not very unlike a nut, the kernel of which is more or less withered, the hope in a general way of restoring the internal part of the foot to its wonted healthful state, is about on a par with the chance of again restoring the natural juices to the kernel. The determination, therefore, to select or reject a horse with contracted feet, should be made first on the extent of the ailment, and, secondly, on the purpose for which the horse is wanted; for the same feet that would enable him to do his business as a hunter for several seasons, would probably, from concussion on hard dry roads, cripple a hack before the termination of one summer. Faulty fore feet are, however, far more bearable in a hunter, at least in

my estimation, than equally faulty hocks: that is, fore feet faulty in the way last-mentioned.

SINEWS.

Where there is indication of any of the sinews or ligaments of the leg suffering under the influence of strain, I would certainly leave such a horse to those who might have time and inclination to take such a patient under their hands. Under certain circumstances I might be tempted to buy a horse labouring under recent strain of such parts; that is, buy him at a certain price to cure, or try to cure, if the case was hopeful: but for work, I would reject him at any price, even were the ailment but trifling in appearance, and would strongly recommend my reader to do the same; for though I have said faulty fore feet will often stand in the place of better ones, in a hunter faulty sinews will be but a sorry apology for sound ones. These are, to use a play on the word, really "the sinews" of a hunter. With faulty ones the mere putting the foot on an uneven bit of hard ground, or one ridge and furrow field, will often render a horse useless for any purpose. I would, of the two, rather see a favourite horse break his leg, than get a thorough and determined break-down of the sinew. An ordinary broken shank-bone may, by time and care, be mended as strong

as ever; the really broken-down sinew cannot. It may be said that we see numbers of horses going sound with fired fore legs, and that when fired between the knee and fetlock, it has been generally done in cases where the sinews have given way; nay, further, we hear that such or such a race-horse broke down, and then see him come out the next year and run as well as ever. This is all true in a certain degree, but not wholly so. It is quite true that horses are fired for relaxed sinews, but not by a man of sense for a real broken-down sinew, at least not with any hope of cure; and although race-horses are said, in technical terms, to have broken down, they have not all done so; those that have, do not race again, those that do have not; they have only materially injured the part, and this by time and treatment is to be rectified.

A horse may from over, or too often repeated exertion, exhibit legs perfectly frightful to look upon; he may also be as lame on those legs as an animal can possibly be; they may, to the casual observer, even feel as if it was a thorough and hopeless break-down, and still it may be no real break-down at all; for the sinews may, in point of strength, be perfect, and the great relaxation we may see, and inflammation we may ascertain to exist, may be confined to the covering, and parts surrounding the tendon: this will

produce not only lameness, but absolute helplessness; yet fomentations, time, and bracing applications, may effect a cure even without firing. This difference of the cause of lameness accounts for our often seeing horses with very swollen legs going sound, and others, with but little show of enlargement, being lame; in one case the tendon itself has not sustained much injury, whereas in the other it has. Where we see horses with swollen legs long after they have become sound, the continuance of the enlargement is usually from the complaint having been improperly treated; very commonly from stimulants, or, at least, bracing applications having been used before inflammation had totally subsided; for though, in professional language, "counter-irritation" is often very judicious and efficacious, topical irritation is quite another affair; and in such cases, though it may be very efficacious, and it most probably would be, it would be so in the wrong way.

It will thus be clear to the reader (supposing my ideas to be correct) that we must not in all cases be induced to purchase or reject a horse solely from the look of his legs; for, if we did, we might reject a very serviceable animal, and be induced to purchase one that would become lame, or perhaps really break down on the first call for exertion. A good, well braced-up fired

leg, if the sinews are firm, and no stiffness remains, is as good as ever it was; but where the leg does not show and feel thus, fired or not fired, such a horse should be at once rejected; for if, in such a case, we do not absolutely buy a cripple, we buy an animal that certainly will shortly become one. It is true a horse with a strained and relaxed tendon may still do very light work, but who would burthen themselves with such an animal unless they meant to keep him like a toy, occasionally to be exhibited and then returned to his box. I dislike any failing in a horse that keeps one in hourly fear of its becoming worse, and this an equivocal kind of sinew always does; and though I do not advise my reader to always reject an *enlarged* leg, I most strongly recommend him at once to reject an uncertain sinew.

CORNS.

This very common failing in the horse is so well known, that any description of them is quite unnecessary. It would be absurd to say they are of little consequence, but still as absurd to advise the rejection of a horse because he had them, as the propriety of such a purchase depends on their effect, not their presence. He may have very extensive corns, and yet be always sound on

them; or very minute ones to the eye, yet be seriously inconvenienced and lamed by them. Hundreds of horses have corns without any one suspecting it, and so long as he remained sound, or nearly so, the fact might never be known. If he becomes lame, and his feet are in consequence of it minutely examined, the drawing knife or searcher lets the owner or somebody into the secret. That becoming known, the foot properly put to rights, and with a proper shoe put on, the horse probably goes sounder than he has for months past. If a horse has corns, the principal thing to be looked at is not so much the soreness of them, or how far he may even go lame on them, but the kind of foot he has. If he has good wide, or, in more stable phrase, open heels, and the wall or crust is strong, so as to afford good nail hold, I have very little fear of corns, for such a foot will allow the means of taking off pressure from them. They will often, in such a case, hold out prospect of cure, or, if not, of such palliative as amounts to nearly as good an effect, that is, feeling no inconvenience from them; if, however, the heels are narrow, it is almost impossible to prevent the great aggravation of the disease, namely, pressure. We may even in such a case take away *super* pressure, that is, pressure from the shoe on the affected parts; but then there will remain what I will term *lateral pressure*, which

will be between the bars and the heels or crust of the foot. These bars are intended by nature to act as props, keeping the heels at their proper distance apart, and are usually left, say an eighth of an inch or more above the surface of the sole of the foot. When we say we cut away the bars, which in corn cases is often done, it only means they are so much lowered as to be on a level with the sole; but as the corn is seated below this, it will become evident we cannot, or at least dare not, cut the bars away deep enough to prevent pressure between them and the heel, which, if in close affinity (which is the case in narrow heels) is very great; in fact, the corn is in a kind of natural vice, whose almost acute angle presses it on either side. A horse with corns and such heels should not be bought; he will rarely be sound three days together. He will be more or less lame if he is not worked *at all*, and work will lame him further from the soreness and inflammation it occasions; but should the foot be good and cool, the horse in work, and sound, he may safely be purchased, however extensive the appearance of the corns may be; for should even a little tenderness or soreness be perceived after unusual work on hard roads, keeping the feet in warm water a few hours for a day or two, and a dose of physic, will set all right again.

In cases where soreness comes on from corns, if the feet are good, we generally know the worst,

and its remedy. Such lameness is not, like failing of the sinews, likely to be permanent, or end in helplessness. On the contrary, with care there is no such danger; but every prospect of that care being recompensed by the comparative or total soundness of the horse, or, to say the least, his freedom from lameness.

Corns to a hunter or harness horse, are of much less consequence than to the hack. The first mostly goes on soft ground; the latter having no weight on his back, his corns sustain only the pressure of his own, and many such horses work quite sound that would become lame as road hacks. In purchasing, therefore, a horse with corns, be they of a better or worse description, it will be found that they will affect the animal more or less in accordance with the purpose he is wanted for; and this, quite as much as any other circumstance, must decide his being likely to answer the purchaser's purpose.

CURBS.

When mentioning imperfections and ailments of the hocks, I should have alluded to curbs, but they bear so close an affinity to windgalls, that, when on the subject of thorough pins, I was led back to the fore legs. I must now beg leave to return to the hind ones.

I have heard persons make a sweeping affirmation that "they thought nothing" of curbs; now as I hold them to be of considerable importance, one party, it may appear, must be wrong. Yet I will endeavour to reconcile this apparently wide difference of opinion. It is always dangerous, or rather injudicious, to lay down any law without qualification, and it is so to state that any one thinks nothing of curbs.

If a person says he thinks little of a horse manifesting symptoms of curbs, or even throwing out considerable enlargement on the curb place, I quite jump with such opinion, for a recent exhibition of such only shows that we must (if we mean a radical cure, and that without great blemish) set to work *immediately*, in which case we may generally feel assured of complete success: but a rank and decided curb, I venture to say, is very difficult to get rid of, and very often never is cured. When I say cured, I do not mean that the horse may not be useful and do his work, but I only call a thing cured where the affected part is brought to a state that enables it to perform all its functions as well as it did before it became disarranged. If we broke or strained the spring of a carriage so as to be obliged to send it to be repaired, should we call the accident remedied, if we found, on using the vehicle, that our teeth chattered in our head on passing over a rough

road or the street pavement? It may have been made strong, and quite adequate to support the weight it is designed to carry, but the best we could say of it would be, it was safe; but as a spring, its chief utility has not been restored. It is often something like this with curbs.

A recent curb is generally easily reduced by rest, cooling, and afterwards stimulating applications, or blistering. By these it may often be perfectly cured; sometimes permanently. But this is by no means certain; for without firing, it is in no way improbable that it will be brought on again by exertion. Taking it, however, in its early stage, and firing, will mostly render the part as effective as ever, and no further blemish will remain than the strokes of the iron.

If, however, after the curb has shown itself, it is trifled with, and the horse kept going, the enlargement becomes so indurated that actual cautery will probably fail as to reducing it, and very often as to rendering the horse sound. If, under such circumstances, it does remedy the absolute lameness, the horse ever goes on two inelastic crutches in lieu of two springy joints, on which the elegance, smoothness, and pleasant feel of action so materially depends.

I would, therefore, strongly advise the reader to mistrust the assertion that curbs are to be considered lightly. They are often a serious evil; in

fact, if I was obliged to purchase a horse with faulty hocks, there is a description of confirmed spavin that, of the two evils, I would select in preference to a confirmed existing curb.

I must allow that decidedly the best and fastest horse I ever possessed had two very rank curbs, for which he had been severely fired, but a considerable enlargement of the parts remained. I knew him before I bought him, so was not afraid of his getting worse. It was a frequent remark among those who saw him go, that he was never lame on his hocks. I knew better: the fact was he was always lame, and had one hock been cured, the lameness would have been evident enough; but luckily, both being equally affected, it made him go with each alike.

But to show that this horse knew more about his hocks than my neighbours did, he was an extraordinary *flying* leaper, but nothing could make him *attempt* to take any thing in a stand, not even in hand; he would refuse, and not make a trial at it. The fact was, he could not bend his hocks sufficiently to enable him to do it, and he felt he could not rest long enough on them to leisurely raise his fore parts, or trust to their propelling his body over a fence without the impetus of going fast at it. But he would fly any fence that could be called practicable, and skim over water like a swallow.

I have mentioned this horse as some corroboration of my assertion, that decided curbs are not easily cured, and, if of long standing, never are; true, this horse could do more than one in perhaps a hundred could, and, in point of speed, I never met with one hunter that could stay by his side on good galloping ground. It is also true, I sold him at a stiffish price: but his curbs were only at best braced up, not cured, for he was by no means pleasant to sit on in his gallop; and, at a leap, from want of elasticity in his hocks, they gave his quarters so sudden a jerk that, unless a man was used to him and prepared for the shock, he would be sent clean off the saddle. I believe the comparison of what he was, and what he would have been with clear hocks, completed my utter detestation of curbs, or really faulty hocks in any way, that is, for a riding horse. I will conclude this part of my subject by mentioning another state in which it is not unlikely a horse may be brought out for sale: namely,

NERVED, or, in more proper definition of the operation,

UNNERVED.

On this state I cannot speak practically, never having owned a horse that had been operated on, nor do I believe I have ridden one.

I am, however, acquainted with the operation of neurotomy, having several times seen it performed, and am aware of the effect usually produced by it, which can only simply be called alleviation of pain; for it is not done as a cure of the *disease* causing the suffering: it relieves the effect, but does not do away with the cause. Personally, I would not purchase a horse that had been unnerved at any price; but this is, of course, no rule for others to go by. I am aware that there are many horses going well that have been operated upon, and the lasting good effect of the operation I conceive to depend on the nature of the complaint that rendered the horse lame. If we could be certain the cause of lameness had come to its worst, but left acute pain only as the result, it would, in such a case, be both merciful and judicious to have the operation performed without delay. If, on the contrary, the disease was a progressive one, and of a nature that would, without the operation, shortly or eventually leave the animal a cripple — if a horse thus circumstanced belonged to myself, I would have him destroyed at once; for the only effect of the operation would be to enable the poor brute to stumble along a short time longer, and the result would be, perhaps, some day leaving one of his hoofs on the road, or exhibiting the mortifying and distressing

exhibition of a joint or joints daily progressing to total anchylosis.

Of the propriety or utility of unnerving a horse, if the person applied to is one fit to be intrusted with the performance of the operation, he will be of such respectability that we may confidently trust to his advice on the subject.

CHAP. V.

HABITS AND PROPENSITIES. — BITING. — DIFFERENT KINDS OF KICKING. — KICKING IN THE STABLE. — KICKING IN HARNESS. — RUNAWAY. — REARERS. — STARTING AND SHYING. — LEADING WITH THE WRONG LEG. — NERVOUSNESS. — JIBBING HORSES. — CUTTING. — BROKEN KNEES. — BAD FEEDERS. — LOW AND HIGH ACTION.

HAVING now touched upon most of the ailments under which a horse is likely to be offered for sale, and having stated, to the best of my ability, the more or less objectionable effects of them in their different forms and stages, I will now turn my attention to some of the prevailing habits and propensities of horses, and consider how far each is more or less objectionable, as relates to the description of horse, and the intending purchaser.

It would be uncalled for, in a work like the present one, to specify the different acts of a horse under different classifications. The term propensities is sufficient to embrace all that is necessary in mentioning them.

BITING.

This really abominable vice, or, at all events, vicious habit, let it arise from what cause or pro-

pensity it may, is looked on by many owners of horses as a very minor sin; in fact, such owners as seldom or ever visit their horses in the stable, seem to hold biting as a little kind of playfulness in the horse, though they have a more than ordinary terror of one inclined to kick at people. This wide difference in their estimation of these vices, arises from their own persons being far oftener endangered by the one than by the other. The favours of the biting horse are only conferred on their groom, who, I suppose, they consider is (as the eels are to be skinned) used to it; for as but few horses have opportunity to bite out of the stable, and indeed few much disposed then to do so, Master is safe enough; but any propensity to kick at him when preparing to mount, brings on strong apprehension of personal danger, and then Master greatly dislikes a vicious horse.

Now owners who are accustomed to go up to their horses in their stalls, will agree with me that of the two, a horse disposed to bite is worse than one disposed to kick; for he will effect his purpose ten times where the other will once, and for this reason — the kicker throws out on finding something or somebody approaching; the chances are, if he does kick, he misses hitting his object; and again, by watching the proper time, we can get beyond the reach of his heels, namely, to his head or shoulder: but the biter stares us full in the

face, no chance of his missing his aim, and when once he has got hold, it is sometimes no easy matter to get released from his grip. The horse that merely gives us a transient pinch when being dressed is no biter, it is like the playful blow a person might give if we tickled him; in fact, an almost involuntary act. But the real biter *means* savaging us, and, if he gets us down, will often use his fore feet as well as his teeth. I have no hesitation in saying, a determined biter exhibits, in a hundred fold, more determined vice than the horse who throws out on being approached. Biting shows determined hate (probably, I allow, with good reason on his side). Kicking at us often proceeds from fear or nervousness.

No kindness, or its reverse, severity, ever, I firmly believe, has, or ever will, eradicate the detestable trick of biting; for I am quite sure it originates and is carried on from a hatred of mankind, that is, speaking of them in general terms. As some proof of this, and that it is not as in the case of a horse biting while something is done to him, as dressing, girthing, &c., look at a race-horse; many of these a trainer dare not approach, unless the lad who has the care of the horse has put him up to the rack chain. This same horse permits the boy to go under his belly, to save the time of going round him; the boy gets into the manger to be able to reach the head

of the horse, who will not touch him. This shows that when the horse does lay hold of another person, he means it; it is no playful act, but a determination to punish, and, in many instances, to destroy, if he is not prevented carrying his intention into effect.

From these circumstances though I certainly would not refuse to buy a race-horse because he would bite me, or a hunter because he might be disposed to do so, if I was careless in going up to him; yet I certainly would not buy a determined biter for general use, for such horses must often be given in charge to strangers, and the bare dread of a person being disabled or injured for life by a horse that I felt it was dangerous to commit to his charge, would keep me in a constant fidget; and should such a catastrophe take place, an owner who felt apathetically on the occasion, would deserve to be worried by his own horse. The purchaser must not be deterred from purchasing, or induced to purchase, from what he may see of a horse out of the stable, so far as regards the vice of biting when in. Many, when out of it, will lay back their ears, seeming to snap at any passer by; these are rarely determined biters: they might give a person a nip, it is true; if they did, they would then themselves become alarmed, and a trifling pinch would be all the mischief perpetrated. It is really with such horses

more play than vice, though I grant horse play may lead to a sore arm for a day or two; yet such horses may safely be bought; they do not contemplate any serious injury to any one.

The determined biter, like the bulldog, does not give warning of his intention, so as to put us on our guard; he looks steadily at us, bides his time, and then seizes with a vice-like grip that it is not easy to make him relax; yet such horses out of doors are often perfectly harmless. We might be led to purchase such a quiet-looking animal, and then find that so soon as he was in his stall, it was dangerous beyond description to get within reach of him.

I had a mare a most determined biter in the stable, but the best tempered animal alive out of it; she would lay hold of the toe of my boot as I sat on her, if I held it towards her, and very often of her own accord without; she would hold it as if she feared to hurt me. I have made her, hundreds of times, take pieces of bread held between my lips (a foolish trick, I allow); but I have still a nose on my face, nor was it ever in danger from any attempt of her's. She was too good a hunter to be parted with for her fault, for though her bite was awful when she got a chance in the stable, she would let go; and not, as really savage biters will do, absolutely worry a man. Had she been disposed to do this, I would not have kept

her even as a hunter; for I should not forgive myself if I got a valuable man crippled by such a demon, merely because I was carried well with hounds; had I such a hack, he should go for what he would bring at the first auction I could send him to.

I strongly recommend every gentleman to at once reject a determined biter: that is, for an every day horse.

KICKING.

Various are the occasions on which, and various the circumstances under which, a horse will kick; I do not, therefore, at once recommend a purchaser to reject a kicker, as I have done a biter; for, taking it in its very diffuse term, where one horse kicks from vice, at least twenty do so from other incentives: but as the different occasions on which a horse may kick makes all the difference in point of objection to different persons, and also to the different purposes he is wanted for, we must particularise, to a certain degree, the different *kinds* of kicking. We will commence with—

KICKING IN THE STABLE.

If a horse only kicks when he is being dressed, we will dispose of him in a very few words; he

mostly kicks merely from being ticklish, and then from habit; he means no harm. Any decent stableman knows how to keep out of danger with such a horse, even a common ostler does; if not, let him get a rap, and then he will learn: such a horse is little objectionable.

Many will kick in the stable so soon as the lights are put out, and the men gone; they merely kick at the standings and stall post, with what intention I never could find out; idleness, I conclude, first induced them to do it, and habit induces them to keep it up. It is a bad trick, for it not only keeps them from their rest, but disturbs other horses. Yet it is no serious objection; a collarshank log, buckled with a small strap in the hollow of the pastern, usually stops them: if not, put on a strap, and chain of twelve or fourteen inches long. This rarely fails. If neither will do, put the horse in a box, and let him kick till he is tired of it.

Many horses kick when first mounted; if the purchaser is aware that he can sit tight in his saddle, and does not mind the little inconvenience of this habit, there is no reason to reject such a horse; it is no indication whatever of his being a kicker in any other way, or any presumptive evidence of vice: it is an acquired habit, of which most probably he will never be broken; correction would only spoil his temper, and probably induce him to

kick at us instead of the air. I should certainly buy such a horse, if in other respects I liked him; I would much sooner refuse one apt to kick hounds, which many are inclined to do.

KICKING, OR DISPOSED TO KICK IN HARNESS.

If a horse is at all inclined to kick in harness, let me strongly advise a buyer to listen to no excuses made for his having done so. He may go quietly for a week, month, or year; but, unless he is a mere inexperienced colt, kick again he will, so sure as he is a horse. If, after knowing what harness means, a horse kicks, he is not to be radically cured of the propensity; believe no breaker who promises to "take it out of him." Speaking, therefore, as in this case I suppose myself to be doing, to the generality of persons who want a horse for general use in harness, I advise them to at once reject one that has kicked, at any price and under any circumstances.

In seeming contradiction to such advice, I have had several kickers; have bought them knowing them to be such; nor, supposing a horse to possess some most rare qualifications to make amends for it, do I much care about a merry kicker: but then it must be for a carriage, where I can so hamper the gentleman that he can do no mischief, between a good pair of gig shafts to instance; but

in a phaeton, or such like carriage, and with ladies to alarm, I would no more trust to a horse who had kicked, than I would to an enraged bull. The very same horse that I should laugh at a man pretending to be a coachman (as gentleman or not), if he was afraid to drive, I would at once entreat him to refuse for the service of a family. If, for such a purpose, a man bought such a horse for his appearance, his vanity would be unjustifiable and reprehensible; if a diminished price was the incentive to purchase, his sordidness would be contemptible, and indeed criminal.

A RUNAWAY.

There are so many circumstances under which a horse may, as it is in general phrase termed, run away, that advice as to the purchase of such a horse, or a horse having done this, must depend on the circumstances under which the runaway took place. For though, speaking in a general way, we know that a horse who has once absolutely run away, will be disposed to try it again, still we are not with him (as we are with the horse disposed to kick in a light low phaeton) almost helpless; here the best coachmanship may become all but useless: but if a man has hands, and a head of the right sort, a horse disposed to run away is to be prevented doing so. Running

away nineteen times in twenty is occasioned by fright or emulation in the horse, by carelessness or knowing nothing of what he is about in the driver. If a person asked my advice as to buying a horse that had run away in harness, my first thought would be to learn what sort of a workman (be he owner or servant) the individual might be who would have the driving of the horse. If that person was in technical term a coachman, the probability is my advice would be, if you like the horse, buy him. If, on the contrary, the driver elect, whether master or man, was found to be one of those helpless specimens of coachmanship we daily see in the person of both of these, I should at once say, if you mean to drive those out with you for whom you have any value, or have any regard for your own bones, have nothing to do with him. There are plenty of men to whom he would be valuable, but with you or your man he will go off again to a certainty. Before, therefore, you enter into minute inquiries about the habit of the horse, be minute in the investigation of your own coachmanship.

To convince either master or man that they were such apologies for coachmen, might not be easy; but having given the advice, I should have acquitted my conscience. The one or the other would, most probably, both buy and drive the horse. If they should do this, and he did not

convince them of what I had failed to do, I would eat him; and I should have no fear of being called upon to perform such a gastronomic feat.

If, for instance, a horse had started off from being improperly left standing by himself in harness, no catastrophe had happened to hurt, or materially to have alarmed him, and he had been stopped without accident, I should have no fear of such a horse—any high-spirited one would do the same thing; he might safely be purchased, for it is our fault if we leave him unheld. But if, in his fright, any thing had broken, so as to hurt or alarm him, then would he be quite unsafe in any hands but those of a coachman, not because he started off, but because he got a fright or injury as its consequence.

Again, should a horse become so excited by a crowd of horsemen galloping by him, we will say at a trotting match, coming from a race, or what not, if he was pulled up or stopped without accident, *he* need not be feared; we should only have to keep him away from such extraordinary excitement in future. His act was not the result of fear, dislike to harness, or vice of any sort; but the effect of a cause without which he never would have attempted it, and without which there is no reason to suppose he will ever attempt it again.

In another case a horse may have run away from high mettle, having bad hands over him, or

an improper (and for him) inefficacious bit in his mouth. With a man with bad hands *no horse* is safe, unless it be a beast that wants a flail in lieu of a whip to get him along, instead of reins to hold him in. If the fault was in the bit, that is easily changed; if in the hands, the sooner they or the horse are changed the better. But if a man knows what he is about, he need not hesitate to buy this horse, for most high-mettled horses would run away, at times, if they could; the only thing is, if good-tempered they submit to the hint or control of the bit to check their inclination; if their temper is not quite so amenable, the severity of it will produce the same effect.

The horses that I consider perfectly safe and good-tempered, I only mean are so in tolerably efficient hands, for high-mettled ones, though quite as good-tempered, and no more, or so much, prone to vice as sluggish ones, may perhaps, nay certainly would be, from high courage and spirits, induced to take liberties if left to their own inclinations; and it is this very inclination that makes them carry themselves handsomely, step with freedom of action, and in fact is one of their best attributes.

If, however, a man was, from nervous temperament, illness, or infirmity, quite unable to exert himself, or if his total inexperience in horses incapacitated him from using the ordinary measures

for their control, I would certainly advise such a person never to buy a horse that had run away, or could be induced to do so, be it under what circumstances it might; for, with such helpless hands over him, he would go away again, not from habit or vice, but simply from an inclination to do that which I would wish every harness horse to do, namely, to go faster than I required him to do. In fact, the very horse I would prevent such a person purchasing, would be the one I should select for most of my friends; and the horse I would select for such a person as the one described, I would, if offered for my use as a present, at once reject.

There are horses that will, from vice, or something very like it, run away, as others will kick; often they do both. A thorough coachman may manage such reprobates, let their acts arise or originate from what they may; but in a general way I should most certainly say, if a horse is one that, from some cause for which we cannot account, has run away more than once, reject him for any general or gentlemanly purpose; his safe place is the wheel of a coach; or now, with a steady partner, an omnibus would suit him, for we must not grumble at a little occasional spree from a kicker, when we ride a moderate journey for three-pence.

We may in great measure decide on the pro-

bability of a repetition of running away by this criterion. If, from peculiar circumstances, a horse does so, it is usually only under such circumstances that he will do so again; but if, without fright, injury, particular excitement, or improper usage, he runs away, depend upon it he is an old offender; nothing will cure him of the propensity, and only force and management opposed to brute force, will prevent his carrying this propensity into execution.

REARERS.

This habit, or rather the objections to it, depend on the extent to which it is carried; be it, however, more or less, it is one that no horsemanship can totally counteract or prevent. All that can be done is, if or when we become aware of the causes of it, to avoid as much as possible putting the horse in the way of them. If the rearing is not carried to a dangerous extent, it is a very pardonable failing; but if it amounts to a chance of a fall backwards, I do not know of any so dangerous a situation that a rider can be placed in; and, worse than all, it is one generally affording no hope of cure, and but little of prevention.

It is true that there are bits made expressly for rearing horses, that will not only in the generality of cases prevent their getting up, but

will frequently deter them from attempting it, and by so doing get them out of this dangerous habit. Still these bits are not fit for general use, and some horses are quite cunning enough to know when they have them on, and when used without them will rear as much as ever.

There are numbers of horses who, when in harness, will always rear more or less on starting, or rather just prior to doing so; such horses, though they may not rise to a dangerous height, often plunge violently forwards just before descending; in which case, unless harness is very strong, a broken trace is a frequent occurrence, and sometimes a splinter bar; and either may bring on alarm and mischief. If a moderate rear and jump are the only failings, such a horse may be bought with perfect confidence; the act does not proceed from any vice, but merely a little impatience, and after first starting such horses are just as quiet as others.

The horse that rears on being required to go in a particular direction, does so from stubbornness; he knows he frequently gets his own way by resorting to this manœuvre, which nothing but strong nerves, a strong arm, firm seat, and patience in the rider will counteract. To a man not possessing all these, for all are necessary, I should say reject such a horse at once; with a hasty tempered rider, the horse will become vio-

lent and dangerous; with a timid one, he will shortly become master, and then probably incorrigible.

STARTING AND SHYING.

These failings are both very objectionable; but they must be carried to great extent ere they become, under general circumstances and situations, very dangerous. They are, in effect, more annoying than replete with danger. A great portion of the objection to each depends on the probable frequency of the situations in which they may occur, where danger may arise. For instance: a horse merely shying is of no great consequence in the country; for if he swerves out of his straight course there is generally room enough to admit of his doing so without getting into difficulties; and here the matter ends with his cause of alarm, be it what it may, and we sustain no very unpleasant sensation from what he does. But if a man is sitting quietly on his horse in a musing mood, called forth by reflection on his lady love, or, in these venal and uncourtly days, more probably by some account unsettled, or by his banker's account by which the gentleman finds himself settled, then the sudden shock of the regular starter gives no erroneous idea of a dislocation of every bone of our anatomy, it jars to the very

vitals; nor must we retaliate by correction, that would only make things worse the next time, for then, instead of becoming quiet so soon as the momentary alarm or astonishment is over, the animal will become terrified at the fear of punishment likely to follow an act that it will in no way prevent a repetition of. I grant it requires some, or great, if you please, command of temper to caress, and, as it were, encourage such a living galvanic battery, after giving so severe a shock; but it is the only way likely to soften the effect of both the cause and the act. One piece of advice I give without reservation, and it will be found good: "let no impatient man buy a starting or shying horse at any price."

Now, to ride about London streets, if a man is, from circumstances, compelled to pay so heavy a penalty for locomotion as I hold riding on horseback in the streets to be, I would, of the two evils, prefer starting to shying; for we will not suppose our reader to have so bad a seat on his horse as to be thrown out of his saddle by a start, when he is aware he is on a horse that frequently gives one. The starter usually gives a sudden jarring motion with his forelegs, draws himself up, stares, and perhaps snorts; his act is only a sudden stoppage of progression, and possibly he does not diverge in a lateral direction a yard from his track; the object of alarm gets out of sight,

or ceases to alarm: the horse becomes tranquil, and again moves on. But the horse that shies does not stop, he wheels out of his course, and by avoiding a cart, gig, or barrow throws himself in full contact with an omnibus, which will have rather the best of the collision. Our facetious author of old could figure nothing to his reader to compare with the shock sustained by his obstetric hero on meeting Obadiah. Mem. he had never tried an omnibus.

Shying, however, I consider a habit holding out far greater hope of cure than starting; my reasons for having formed such an opinion, brings both starting and shying into a still more objectionable point of view than the usual results of the acts themselves.

If on being first brought to London a horse shies at carriages, or starts at punch and his accompaniments, both acts are easily accounted for: he fears danger from collision with the first, and is alarmed or astonished by the appearance of the latter. It is quite natural he should be; a country girl is frightened by the crowd of carriages in London. A London miss who would stare the fine fellows that compose the life guards out of countenance, is frightened to death if, in the country, she meets a few harmless cows, though by far the least dangerous to her. The two girls are alarmed by what they have been unaccustomed

to come in contact with: so is a horse in a novel situation when he meets, to him, strange objects.

But if we find horses shying at or starting from objects they are accustomed to see and meet, their habit then leads us to a very well founded suspicion that the act arises from other causes; and when under such circumstances they do this, I am pretty confident that, in more cases than we suppose, the imperfection of the organs of sight have more to do with it than any other cause. Shying at a particular object, or something similar to it, may readily arise from having received injury or fright from such; but when it is carried to a variety of objects, we have no fair reason to attribute it to such a circumstance.

Starting at any sudden sound evinces timidity and nervousness. So *may* shying from even a variety of objects; but starting at what cannot be considered as any thing unusual, I consider all but proof of the eyes being faulty. I would, therefore, advise the buyer to pause in concluding the purchase of such a horse, and before he concludes it, to take the best professional advice that can be had; for though a high, and perhaps just, opinion of his horsemanship might induce a man not to reject a shying or starting horse, I conclude he does not wish to possess himself of a blind one; which he, in most cases, will be the

eventual possessor of, if he buys one whose eyes are imperfect at the time of purchase.

It is very common to see persons wave their hand up and down before a horse's eyes: the animal gives a motion, perhaps with his head, or a wink with his eye, "oh he sees well enough," or "the eyes are all right," are expressions used on such occasions, as commonly as this most deceptive mode of trial is put in practice. But that I know such supposed proofs to be resorted to, I should have hardly held it necessary to remind such persons that a horse must be (in stable term) as blind as a bat if he cannot see a hand or a something within six inches of his eye. And, further, I will apprise those relying on such proof, that the increased circulation of air caused by the waving of the hand will often make a stone-blind horse wink; the feel of the air apprises him that something approaches, he winks to protect his eye from injury: the motion is natural, and may be called involuntary. Many a half-blind one is bought under such circumstances; and if the iris of the eye happens to be of a good brown, the sale is certain.

I am not entering into any pathological description of the horse's eye, nor have I on any ailment incidental to him; but I wish at least to guard the reader against purchasing a starting horse without professional advice, because he

evinces that he sees a hand, or that the general look of the eye is prepossessing. I have heard it maintained no man could be considered drunk if he could tell whether or not a candle was alight held before his eyes. It certainly seems there are persons equally liberal in their estimation of the goodness of the horse's vision; my reader I hope will be a little more sceptical on the latter point. The pros and cons, as regards the stages of inebriety, are not "in my vocation."

LEADING WITH THE WRONG LEG.

This will, at first, appear a matter of very little importance as regards the selection or rejection of a horse. "Oh, I'll soon teach him to take the right leg," cries the purchaser; perhaps he may do this: but may yet, under certain circumstances, find it not so easy a matter to effect as he may suppose, unless it may be a raw colt that has only been half broken; for if it is a horse that has been tolerably well handled, we have no reason to doubt but that he *has* been taught to take the right leg, but prefers leading with the near one for reasons best known to himself, for horses do not change their habits without some cause for doing so; and it is not at all improbable that, if a horse pertinaciously adheres to leading with the opposite leg to that which he

was taught to use in this way, if the rider does succeed in making him lead with the unwilling leg, he may find that so far from being repaid for the trouble he has taken, his horse may go extremely unpleasantly in consequence of the change. He may attribute this to the animal not being accustomed to lead with the off leg, so determines to persevere till he is so what will he say if he finds him go worse instead of better by practice; he would very likely say it was "certainly extraordinary." I should not venture to say it was *certainly* any thing; but I should say it would not be at all extraordinary if it was found that unsoundness in the near foot caused him to change his mode of going from what he had been taught, and to adopt one more easy to himself; and that being again forced to go in a way less so, caused him to go more uneasy to the rider. And if such was the case, the more the less efficient foot became distressed by being used, the more uneasy the horse would grow in his pace.

I find this subject will lead me a little further than I meant on the nature of lameness, for in allusion to whether the horse is disposed to lead with the lame, or the sound leg, depends mainly on the nature of the ailment.

It will be found that in a canter, or gallop, *most* horses, if left to their choice, will lead with the

ailing leg or foot; but by no means always so, for in some cases it is very difficult, and all but impossible for them to do so. The difference of their inclination whether to lead with the ailing, or sound limb, I consider arises from whether the pain or inconvenience consists in extension, or pressure, and this will determine his choice as to the leading limb.

When the horse is in his gallop, of course the number of times each foot comes to the ground in a mile is the same; so, in this respect, each does its share of work; but the nature of the work, and the stress or strain on similar parts of each limb is by no means equally disposed. Extension is the chief labour of the leading leg; support of the body that of the following one.

Now, in cases of shoulder lameness, soreness of the muscles of the arm, or in any case where extension is more painful than support, the horse will not advance that limb; he would prefer placing, or rather going with it in a situation where it might have more weight to support, but with greater diminution of extension: but, supposing the lameness to be in the foot, pastern, or fetlock joints, where pressure upon them becomes painful, and concussion renders that pressure still more so, he will then put it where extension has the greater call on the powers of the limb, and support of the body (which is pressure) will be

lessened. Now, as shoulder lamenesses, or any lamenesses that render extension of the fore-limb painful, bear no proportion in number to those of the lower parts, to which pressure and concussion are most painful, it will account for my remark that the majority of lame horses lead with the ailing limb; for I believe it will not be denied, that the nearer the ground we look for it, the oftener we shall hit upon the seat of lameness in the horse's fore-parts.

The horse's fore leg is a kind of reversed pyramid of bones, and other substances, forming the chief support of the body; that is, it sustains the heaviest portion of it. The articulations of these continual bones are supplied with a cartilaginous substance, destined, I presume, to soften concussion, and are also furnished with a sinovial fluid, that facilitates their moving on, or in each other, without detrimental friction. If this beautiful arrangement is impaired or destroyed, the contact of parts with each other becomes painful at all times; but, when pressure, that is the weight of the body, is added, the pain is of course increased; and, what the horse does to avoid this as much as possible, shows that bringing or putting the foot and limb forwards contributes to this end.

Let us look at two horses standing in their stalls; the one labouring under navicular, or

other lameness, that renders horizontal pressure painful, the other under the influence of shoulder lameness, or one that renders extension painful; the first will be constantly found with his lame limb extended towards, or quite under the manger; the latter will be seen keeping his limb straight under him. This clearly shows, that placing the limb in an advanced position takes from it the pressure, or great part of the pressure, of the weight of the body; for, if putting the limb forward was the general habit of lame horses, be the lameness or cause of increased pain what it might, the horse with shoulder lameness, and the one with navicular lameness, would act in the same manner as to their mode of standing, and this is not the case.

If, therefore, in standing still, keeping the lame limb in advance lessens pain by diminution of pressure, keeping it in advance in the gallop will do the same thing in a much greater degree.

I have gone thus far on this subject in the hope that what I have said will be held to support my statement, that most lame horses wish to lead with the afflicted limb. If my thesis is incorrect, I shall bow with submission to those better informed on the subject. If my opinion is however somewhat near the truth, the reader will not consider that, when I recommended him to find out *why* a horse takes the wrong leg before

he buys, the habit is at all times of such trifling import as it may at first appear.

NERVOUSNESS.

Doubtless there may be many persons unaccustomed to horses, who will think this term inappropriate. Those who have been in the habit of considering this as the special prerogative of fair friends who labour under such constitutional infirmity, or, as is sometimes the case, think it interesting to evince a little pretty timidity, will perhaps reprobate the term altogether as applied to horses. Men, however, who know the different habits and failings of the animal, are quite aware that being nervous is not only a very common, but a most dangerous imperfection of temperament in him, and, what is worse, one never to be totally eradicated.

A lady who would admire the harmlessness and timidity of a pet lamb, might be disposed to wish for a horse similarly disposed. She could scarcely wish for a more dangerous animal for her use; for, in point of fact, the more timid the lady the bolder should be the horse for her service, for if under any circumstances both lady and horse get alarmed, the chances are that some serious catastrophe occurs.

But putting ladies out of the question, unless

a man has strong nerves, and knows well how to manage horses, I most strongly recommend him to reject *at once* a nervous, that is a timid horse, for *any purpose.* With such an animal such an individual would never be in safety.

It may be supposed, and said, and with truth, that a timid horse is more easily cowed by, and less likely to resist the will of, the rider than a bolder one. Doubtless such is the case, but there would be nothing desirable in this, unless the horse had some bad *vice* which we wanted to correct; for supposing any animal to be good tempered, fear of his owner is the last thing to be desired. Cheerful obedience we want, but obedience through fear will only be shown so long as we are so situated as to be able to inspire or keep up that fear, which may not at all times and under all circumstances be the case.

We grant the timid horse fears to disobey, or in milder phrase, is inclined to yield to our command. This fear and inclination only lasts so long as there is no stronger impulse felt to induce the animal to become refractory. The timid horse fears an angry sign from our hand, or an angry sound from our voice, but he would much more fear the sight of an approaching railway train or the firing of a regiment, probably even the big drum would carry the day against us, in influencing the act of our horse. If obedience to

us induces him to stand still when we want him to do so, obedience to the impulse of a greater fear than he has of us, will induce him to run away when we do not want him to do any thing of the kind.

It may appear a startling assertion to say that I would rather have to do with any commonly vicious horse than with a decidedly nervous one, and I really have had a long and multitudinous experience of both sorts; in fact, from the particular situations in which I have been placed as regards horses, I do believe there is no trick or devilry horses can show to man, that I have not often been favoured with by them. The result of this induces me to make this assertion, and on the following ground.

However great a rogue a vicious horse may be, he, like other rogues, is mostly quite awake as to what will injure himself, bodily; that is, he is so unless we let him get so much ahead in his mischief that excitement or fright renders him reckless. Before this he is sensible to pain, and is wise enough to prefer abandoning his vicious intent if he finds we are prepared to thwart him. Not so with the nervous horse. He premeditates no mischief, but when he does wrong, it may be said he cannot help it. In fright, his acts are as momentary and involuntary as the start of some persons on hearing the unexpected discharge of a

gun; he starts, rushes into a ditch, runs straight ahead, or kicks without I must not say reflection, but without purpose; he has no command of himself, and the pain of a bit in his mouth, or the sight of real danger is lost in fright of danger, that was probably only imaginary.

I have known vicious horses who would kick at an object till they crippled themselves, but I have known a far greater proportion who, when they found themselves thoroughly hampered, would become perfectly quiet till extricated. I have had more than one or ten horses that I have been driving kick over the splinter bar, and get their leg fixed under the roller bolt, or wheel iron, when the latter was placed inside the wheel (as of late years they universally are), and when so held many would squeak as loud as a pig from cowardice, rage, sulkiness, or all combined, yet would stand, not "like patience on a monument," but patience on a splinter bar, quiet as a sheep. They felt that a broken leg would perhaps be the penalty of further struggle; but I never yet saw a frightened horse in any way sensible of danger or hurt.

I saw an instance of this sort not long since. A mare that I knew well as particularly good tempered, but a little nervous, was left by her master standing at a door. Something disturbed, or somewhat alarmed her, she trotted gently off,

in doing this the wheel of the gig came against a post, this threw the driving cushion and box on her quarters, away she instantly went at her top galloping speed. Half a mile ahead was a turnpike gate; this she could see as far as she could see any thing, for it was white and shut. One would have supposed she would have at least slackened her pace before she came to it; not a bit, she kept on the same heedless course, did not attempt to jump at it, but ran straight against it, drove in the whole nasal cartilage, bone and all, from the effects of which she died.

To show the difference between the act of a horse running away from vice, high spirits, or particular excitement, unattended by fear, many such horses are cunning enough to slacken their pace the moment they find themselves on new laid gravel, or see a long hill before them; if they got to their home will draw up to the door, and in nine cases in ten would stop if a gate was shut against them, if done in time to allow them to do so; the rogue would not break his skull against it, but the frightened one would in almost every case. A wild horse from the Prairie, without a bridle, is as manageable as a thoroughly scared one.

I have said thus much relative to nervous horses, because I know that very few persons are aware how dangerous they are; and the event

is, that persons who should be the last to purchase such animals, are the first who would be disposed to do so. Tell such persons that a horse was subject to fits of frenzy, they would as soon purchase a Bengal tiger: now, the frightened horse is frenzied for the time being; therefore, as the nervous horse is as likely to be frightened as the other is to have a fit come on, one is as much to be avoided as the other, by those who are nervous themselves; to such persons it is a failing in a horse that no qualifications can make amends for. Let him be condemned, and, I would also recommend, without a trial.

JIBBING HORSES.

This habit is, in most cases, the effect of injudicious treatment on being first broke to harness: but with the cause we have nothing here to do; our business is only whether such a horse may with safety be purchased.

The inconvenience of such varies so much from circumstances, that, alluding to the same animal, I would recommend one man to buy him, and another not to accept him as a present.

I am not supposing a horse to be so regular a jibber that, with a fair carriage as to weight behind him, he will on a level road stop every ten

minutes, but one who will be disposed to do so when more than common exertion is required.

A horse that is not staunch to his collar is never safe to be driven in crowded streets; for, probably at the very moment when, to avoid danger, we want him to make an exertion, he hangs back in his traces; leaving us, carriage and all, to be cracked like a nut between two coal waggons: hit him, he runs back, or plunges.

In a country where the hills are such as render it necessary to get up them in a walk, such a horse would probably be useless, and as probably dangerous; for jibbers are not always satisfied with stopping, but will run back, and are then as likely to land us in a ditch, or send us over a precipice, as leave us in the road. The only security against this taking place is (if there is room, and few places are so narrow as to prevent it), instead of urging the horse forward, to at once turn him sideways to the hill; in other terms, directly across the road. Generally speaking, after standing thus a few minutes, he will go on; at all events it stops his running back.

Where hills are moderate, that is, such as can be trotted up, a horse must be a very rank jibber if he stops, unless the hill be very long and wearisome; in which case, before he does, turn him sideways, and give him a minute's breathing time. In such a country, with a little judicious manage-

ment, an otherwise good horse need not be rejected, if he is a little false collared.

Pulling such horses into a walk, generally ends in their tossing their head about, and then stopping; it is far better to stop them at once, before they stop themselves. In driving them, an eye must be kept to the road; if new-laid gravel, or a soft part, is seen, rattle them over it, and then give them a pull up if it is thought wanting; but, without additional impetus, such occasional obstructions are all but certain to produce a dead stop. If this occurs on either of such occasions as I have mentioned, I wish the driver well out of the predicament.

Many of the best teams of coach horses that ever looked through a collar, if pulled into a walk on heavy ground would not draw an ounce, though they will take three tons through it in a trot; and the higher bred and higher couraged a horse is, the more likely is he to refuse what may be termed a dead pull; very few high tempered ones would draw a barge on a canal. This does not arise from indolence or dislike to exertion, but from impatience of the pace requisite to move heavy weights. Many of the best and gamest collared horses in the world in trotting harness, would not start an empty cart if the wheels stood in only a moderate water drain or gutter.

CUTTING,

Though certainly a habit, I should more properly term a failing, and is, in my estimation, an insurmountable objection to *any* horse. It arises, be the cause what it may, from bad, or, at least, untrue action in some way; it leaves a very unsightly scar on the ankle, and, if carried to any extent, we can hardly keep such a horse sound, for we must either allow him to hit so hard, or cut so deep, as to lame himself by injury to the legs; or, in our endeavours to save them by peculiar shoeing (and which, by the by, will not in all cases effect the purpose), we bid fair to cripple him in his feet; added to this, a blow harder than is usual, is very likely to bring him down on his knees. Of all cutting, the speedy cut is the most dangerous to the rider: such a horse will come down as if he was shot, and it is very rarely that any mode of shoeing will be effectual as a preventive; and the unsightly kind of shield that is made to save the leg, renders a horse quite unfit for a gentleman's use.

With colts, their mode of going, and the position of their feet, and lower joints will generally, to an experienced eye, indicate the probability of cutting when put to work. When the horse has been used, the state of his legs will show any one whether he is in the habit of doing so or not.

Where scars healed up are seen, the common thing said to a purchaser is, "You see, he has not cut *lately;*" giving as an excuse for his having at some time done so, "That he was badly shod," did it, "when he was weak;" or on some unheard of long journey. How far I should credit such assertions, would wholly depend on how the horse went, and how his legs and feet stood, or were put on; and, as to his not having "*cut lately,*" I must remind my reader, it is quite probable the horse has not *worked lately* either.

Of the propriety of purchasing or rejecting a horse showing marks of cutting, circumstances or advice must direct the reader's judgment; but if he cuts speedy, be it a little higher or lower than the usual mark, I strongly advise his being at once rejected for any purpose but a cart or hearse.

BROKEN KNEES.

I place these on the list of habits of the horse, not because they have, in a general way, any thing to do with them, but because numbers of persons conceive that they have, and consider that a horse who has broken his knees is *ipso facto* rendered liable to do the same again, and that he is consequently unsafe. This idea, under ordinary circumstances, is quite erroneous, and has no more

to do with his liability to come down again than breaking his nose would have. There can be no doubt but knees may be so deeply cut and bruised by a fall as to injure the pliability of the joint, and, in so severe a case, the horse probably *would be* unsafe; but it is not a positive and certain result, even under such circumstances, for I have seen horses with a considerable stiffness of one knee, that did not trip or blunder with that limb more than the other: however, we do not contemplate purchasing such a one. I would only advise a buyer not to reject a good horse *with good action*, if he wants one more for use than show, because he had marked knees; if, however, he has such with questionable action, reject him at once, much more on account of the action than the knees. With broken knees and good action, a horse may be, and most probably would be, perfectly safe and pleasant to ride; with bad action, and no broken knees, he would be still more probably neither safe nor pleasant to ride, or even drive.

Subjected, as most horses are, to all sorts of roads and all sorts of riders, we need not be surprised on finding that a horse has broken his knees; our surprise would be more justly called forth on finding one that had not; and when to bad roads and bad riders we add over-fatigue, escaping without, in stable phrase, "a hole in their stock

ings," shows how wonderfully safe on their legs horses must be, in a general way.

On a horse being shown for sale with marked knees, there is always some story told in excuse of the accident. I have heard it gravely affirmed that he had done it against the manger. This is, of course, the veriest nonsense, horses are not such fools as voluntarily to thus hurt themselves; in ninety-nine cases in a hundred, knees are broken by falling on them, but if they are, does one fall show a horse to be unsafe. Many things may cause the safest animal that ever wore a shoe to fall; we need, therefore, no excuse for such an occurrence. On seeing a horse with marked knees, I should never take the trouble of asking how he did it, but I should ask to see him go; if he went well, I should care nothing *how* he broke his knees; if he went unsafely, and they showed me a certificate from the Lord Chancellor that the horse had not broken them by a fall, I would reject him, for I should feel quite certain that, granting he had not broken them this time by a fall, he very soon would break them again by one, and that probably would not be the last.

If, therefore, the reader wishes to purchase a horse at a deteriorated price, he has three chief points to look at: the state and position of the legs, the same of the feet, and the action; if all are good, as an animal for use, I assure him he

may account himself fortunate if he finds such a horse with no greater drawback than marked knees; and, at a proper price, I should say, "buy him."

In giving such a recommendation, I hope my reader will carry along with him the reflection, that the object (and a novel one it is) of this work is not to tell him what perfections in the horse he is to look for, but what imperfections may, under certain circumstances, be tolerated.

BAD FEEDERS.

As a joke, I might fairly say there are two sorts of bad feeders; that is, people who feed their horses badly, and horses that often refuse food when offered them. I sincerely wish animals had the same power of rejecting such masters, as they have of rejecting such horses as I allude to.

Taking the thing in a general way, I have not so great a dread of a light feeder as many persons have; in truth, I would prefer a delicate feeder as a horse, to a really heavy grubber, as a companion; the one is, mostly at least, a vivacious, light hearted, cheerful animal: the latter, only begins to be alive with the near prospect of a knife and fork in his hand; and it will be mostly found that very heavy feeders, of a biped kind,

are also very heavy fellows. In alluding to bipeds, I say fellows, for we do not contemplate a propensity of such enormity in the other sex. If, in any solitary instance, such an uncontrollable propensity should exist, and "such a" stuffing "down stairs" must take place, in mercy's name let the fair cormorant *feed* by herself, and then *dine* with us.

No man is a greater advocate than myself for a horse being able and willing to eat a fair share of provender; and, as a reasonable allowance, I should wish a hunter to take his two bushels and a peck of oats in the seven days: but I have generally found horses that are *always* ready to devour a feed of oats sluggish ones; in short, animals, like many other animals we daily meet with, who have no inclination to exert themselves for the gratification or advantage of others to any degree, that will or may produce inconvenience to themselves.

Old fashioned grooms had several pet expressions to signify a horse having, in their estimation, the great virtue of always being ready to eat; such as, "he has a rare basket to carry his wittals in;" "I likes a horse with a good kicking-place," meaning a corporation, that so far from rendering it necessary to bring your heel up to use your spurs, if wanted, causes one some exertion to keep them out of the sides of the beast.

For a huntsman, who with some harriers hunts his horse three days a week, or for one (if such a one now-a-days could be found) who has hunted the same horse twice a week with a scratch pack, that hunt every thing in turn, such a horse is a treasure; he was so when bagsmen, I do not mean foxes, rode their forty miles a day for a week together: but men who wish to *go* when they *do go*, and do not want to go constantly with the same pair of ears before them, though in the words of the song, they may think that, "a big bellied bottle's a mighty good thing," will not estimate a big-bellied horse in the same degree. I can truly assert I never was carried brilliantly, corkily, and elastically, by any such horse: lastingly I have; but there is, or at least I can conceive, no pleasure in the duration of any thing that is not pleasant in the beginning.

I have had some exceedingly good journey horses of this sort: but, as I never was in the habit of riding, or driving long journeys, they were thrown away on me. If I have to take such, give me merry posters, or a coach; but from a long continuance of road travelling behind a horse, or on him, good fate, deliver me: a pleasure-trip through a picturesque country is another affair: my light-hearted sort will do this, and feed too, and do it pleasantly.

The landlord in the Beau's Stratagem, says, in

commendation of his ale, "strong, aye! it should be strong, or how should they be strong who drink it." It may, therefore, with truth be said of horses, that they should eat heartily, or how can they work heartily. This is in a great degree a perfectly correct idea; but a delicate feeder may still consume on the average quite as much as may be necessary for him, and, with a good groom as his attendant, would be more likely to do well than a glutton would.

It is true that some hunters, some race-horses, and most stage-coach horses consume an enormous quantity of oats. Why is this? It arises from the cause, that voracious appetites must, to keep their possessors quiet and satisfied, be filled with a large quantity of something, and as, for fast work, horses must be limited as to hay, we are compelled to give them oats, to make up a certain weight or bulk to be consumed: a coal-carrier may consume half a dozen pots of porter, and his two pounds of beef-steaks during the day; but we have no record of the running-footman or messengers of old performing gastronomic feats commensurate with their pedestrian ones.

I am by no means certain that a horse refusing his oats after an unusual hard run has not saved many a one from inflammatory attacks of some sort. I am quite certain that a moderate sized race-horse, who will daily eat his five honest quarterns of

oats each day, with appetite, is just as hearty as the glutton who will consume half a bushel. Growing colts certainly will, like growing boys, consume more than adults, and require a little extra allowance.

In stating that I do not object so much as some persons do to shy feeders, I do not of course mean a weak constitutioned animal that suffers so much, when called on for exertion, as to be off his appetite, so long as exertion is required of him; but I mean that a voracious appetite is no sure indication of capability of endurance of that sort of exertion that is called for in a horse for a gentleman's purpose: though that purpose may be that of a hunter. Give me a good back, good loins, and a fair depth of rib, all beneath it may take care of itself; for with the ends of the ribs strength ceases; the rest is mere distention from gross feeding; and though vast room in the hold may be convenient and admirable in a merchant ship, to bring home a thousand sacks of oats, it is the very reverse in the horse, who is never wanted to contain a peck at one time.

If we see a horse poor with fair work, and know him to be a bad feeder, I should say reject him (it shows he cannot eat enough to support nature); but if with fair work he keeps in good working condition, I would never refuse him, because he might require a little manage-

ment as to his feeds. People who want a horse as a slave and as a beast of business, about whom they will give themselves no trouble after he has performed his task, would do well to get a glutton that nothing can choke of his feed, if they do not object to whaling along such a moving mass of repletion, as such horses usually are. We should each take trouble in our different ways. I would greatly prefer some trouble to make my horse feed, to the slightest to get him along. Speed and vivacity *I must* have in a horse for any purpose for which I am to use him: oats I will take care he shall have, if trouble and contrivance can effect it. If he will not spare his trouble to please me, I will not spare mine to benefit him; and if a groom will not take the pains to make a horse feed, if pains will do it, I should not part with the horse, but very soon should with the man.

LOW AND HIGH ACTION.

This difference of action arises from so many causes, that, not to enter into minute or abstruse contemplation of them, I will settle the point by classing it among the habits of the horse. It is caused in some cases by peculiar formation; in others from anatomical influence without reference to form; in others from the mode in which the

colt was broken in; often from a lively or sluggish disposition; and, lastly, from the nature of the work the horse is accustomed to.

The propriety of selecting or rejecting a horse with high or low action, provided it is not carried to a pitch so as to be decidedly objectionable, cannot be determined on without reference to circumstances; for both styles of going, like most other differences, have their *pour* and *contre*. If we know the purchaser, and the purpose for which the animal is intended, advice might be given without hesitation: but to offer it in general terms, requires some consideration, and regard to circumstances.

The man to whom money is no object can of course buy what he pleases, without subjecting himself to any permanent danger, or unpleasantry, as, on finding he has erred in his judgment in the purchase, he has only to direct its being got rid of; and a certain loss of money is the only probable penalty. But as all persons are not so situated as to pecuniary circumstances, a few hints to such, if they save them the certainty or probability of getting that which will occasion loss in the disposal of it, may be held, and probably found to be, useful.

If a person buys a horse with a view to advantage in the resale of him, or with the usual wish of not being obliged to lose money should

such a sale become necessary, if the horse is for any road purpose, I give, on a broad scale, the plain and direct advice, *buy no horse with low action;* for as fashion prevails in these days, such a horse will certainly occasion great loss of time, an infinite degree of trouble, and most probably considerable loss of money, before he can be disposed of.

A person may flatter himself, and many persons do thus err: that if they buy a horse with bad, or we will say unfashionable, action for fifty that would be worth a hundred and fifty if it was the reverse, they need not anticipate loss in the resale: that they may not form such an anticipation is very likely; and certainly they need not if they do not wish to do so; but I assure them that in nine cases in ten loss *will* be the consequence of such transactions.

We may purchase many horses and many other things with certain imperfections, that at a *certain price* are a safe and probably good speculation; but any thing that is all but unsaleable is dear at almost any price. It matters little for the purpose of sale, whether the drawback be of serious consequence or not, if people fancy it is so. If no gentleman would buy a dark chestnut, the Switcher would probably have found his way to a green-grocer's cart, instead of snatching the laurels from some of the best horses in England

in a steeple chase. If no one would buy greys for gentlemen's use, we should ere this have been taken to the Bank by Cigar and Peter Simple as a pair. The present very general rejection of horses with good and safe, but not high, action is little less absurd: many of those who would and do object to such horses, would at the same time be candid enough to admit they do not object to the action as being *bad*, but unfashionable. This does not make the matter much better for the unfortunate owner of the horse; for as everybody now lays some claim to pretension of fashion, while the noble or gentleman would politely say "the horse had not quite as high action as they wished for," the butcher would say, "he can't go no how." The only saving clause, therefore, in buying an unsaleable article at a low price is the loss will be lessened.

The loss, however, in such cases does not always keep commensurate with the price, or, in other words, goes in the same ratio; for should we buy a horse for thirty that would, but for low action, be worth sixty, probably a ten pound note loss gets us out of the difficulty; for the class of persons using thirty pound horses are to be tempted by price: but if we give a hundred and fifty for that which, but for the same failing, or rather want, would be worth double the sum, the difficulty would be, with persons using such horses, to

find a purchaser *at all;* for such persons, for their own use, would not have such a bargain as a gift; and the generality would not take the trouble of huckstering for profit; those that would, and in fact do this, are as wide awake as any dealer to the difficulty of selling such nags: they would be much more likely to buy a regular screw that pulled his knee up to his throat latch. As to the intent with which they often do purchase such flatcatchers, I only say "touch not the Lord's anointed."

Having made the reader aware of the difficulties he will in a general way get into by purchasing horses with low, or rather without high, action, we will now get forward by going on the other tack.

In what I have said relative to high and low action, I have not in any way commended the one or reprobated the other. I have only alluded to usual consequences in point of trouble, time, and money that will occur by the purchase: to exemplify which I will for a moment allude to the purchasing a carriage. I trust it will be allowed by most persons that a curricle is in itself a most gentlemanly carriage, one pleasant to ride in, and, if well hung, one that follows horses easily and smoothly: we will say I order a curricle and a phaeton to be made, and give a hundred and twenty for each. I wish in a month to sell

both. What is the consequence? the phaeton is ready sale. Even supposing, in point of easiness and following the horses, I find it not what I could desire, the sale of it will probably be attended with but little loss, because hundreds are using phaetons. But for the curricle, though it may be the best that ever went on wheels, I should be lucky if I got out of it at the twenty pounds, paying the hundred for having used it a month, Mr. Tattersall comforting me by saying I was a fortunate fellow to find any one willing to take it at all; further consoling me, in his usual candid way, by saying, it was better than paying a couple of years' standing in his yard. My reader will, I dare say, allow my advice would be good; if it was, don't buy a curricle, unless you are determined to keep it: he may trust to my experience when I give the same advice relative to a road horse without fashionable action. My one hundred and twenty pound curricle would, as a carriage for use, be very cheap, to a man who wanted it to use, at eighty pounds; but it would be a very bad bargain if he contemplated reselling it. I hardly know which I would back as the most difficult to sell, a curricle, or a horse with low action. I allude particularly to either being offered for sale in London.

The idea or question may suggest itself to the reader, that, as only comparatively few horses

have showy action, what becomes of those who have it not? To answer this, speaking of horses as animals for various uses, in various situations, and for various persons, high action is not always requisite, or in many cases desirable. Race-horses (we may now also mention), steeple-chase horses, and hunters, would be deteriorated in performance, and consequently in value, by high showy action. Gentlemen wanting horses for country work, where worth is more requisite than mere show, will purchase horses with good, but not fashionable, action. Persons who only want themselves and families to get the benefit of air and exercise, will buy them at a very moderate price. The rest go at a little lower figure, where mere animal labour is wanted. Most of such as I allude to have moderate action; but below this, in London, a horse is, figuratively speaking, not only a drug, but unsaleable.

This mention of the purposes where high action is not required, and the description of persons who will dispense with it, will, in a great measure, show the reader the circumstances under which he may purchase horses without London action. We will, therefore, now look to the effect of action as regards utility, here it will be found that, high as the fashionable goer may rank, in price he will be found about on a par with many men who are always, from their fashion-

able attributes, welcome guests at certain dinners and parties, but are the last who would be selected as fire-side, bosom friends, where the man of sterling worth proffers his claims, "and has those claims allowed."

I have, under certain circumstances, and with certain intentions in view, recommended my reader to "buy no horse with low action," and in such cases I am certain that my advice is good. We will now reverse the picture, and figure to ourselves his saying, "I do not want a horse for mere show: I want merely a gentlemanly, pleasant, safe, and really valuable horse for my own use." Under such circumstances I hope I shall not be said, in vulgar parlance, to "blow hot and then blow cold," if I should say (with very few exceptions) *buy no horse with uncommon high action:* the exceptions would be his being very fast, and going with very true action, which such horses seldom do. If his action was high, and at the same time slow, I should at once say, *do not touch him at any price,* unless you want to ride in the lord mayor's show, or to put him in a hearse, for such an animal is good for nothing else.

One of the objections to uncommonly high action is, that the horse expends those animal powers in show that I want him to exert in speed, or to keep in reserve for a long day, and the durability of his legs, feet, and stamina, these must all

suffer in the horse with fast and at the same time very high action. The legs and feet suffer from concussions; the animal powers suffer from exhaustion; and, when tired, such horses become very unsafe, which will be seen in a few lines.

I shall perhaps surprise some readers when I give it as an opinion, founded on practical experience, that horses with slow and very high action are as unsafe as any horse short of an absolute cripple can be; nay, even more so, if the cripple be a game one; for, though the latter from infirmity may faulter ten times in every mile, the genuine bit of generous spice in his composition will induce him to catch himself up, as if ashamed to show the failing of his wasted powers. Now the horse with fast and high action, when fatigued, good though he may be, is brought against his will to the level of the high and slow mover when fresh: the want of power in the one reduces him to the standard of want of activity in the other; and where the want of activity prevails, be it from natural causes or fatigue, the effect is the same; treading on a stone, a rolling one, or a blow on the leg from the other foot, down both must come.

If terms always carried a proper signification with them, it might appear somewhat of an incongruity when I state that horses with high, slow action are very apt to cut speedy; and this shows a fact known to most men judges of action, that

speedy cutting does not depend on velocity, but action and formation of parts. I am quite aware that a horse going in a slovenly manner six miles an hour may not lift himself enough to cut speedy; and that when we gather him up and make him exert himself, he may do so: this, however, only proves he goes badly at all times, and that, when he is urged to lift his legs a little higher than usual, he hits the first prominent part his foot comes in contact with. Such are most sovereign brutes. I once took one in exchange (I hope I need not say drawing money), drove him *once*, and then exchanged him for cash with the first person I could find of that description of whom it is said that they "and their money are soon parted." This brute went well enough, though he could not manage five miles in half an hour; at least I should think he would not. He cut from the formation of his feet; they were what I detest —remarkably large and platter-like: in short, he could not keep them out of the way of his legs. I never saw but one galloping horse in my life, who was a clipper that had large feet.

In justification of my abhorrence of slow, high-actioned horses, and to show that cutting speedy is not the effect of pace, the horse with high action that will not interfere at all while fresh, will often cut severely when fatigued; and, as most horses become slow when tired, it shows the great draw-

back slow high action is in the horse, even when fresh, for such will cut when faster ones may not.

Another objection to high-actioned horses in point of safety is this, the longer time that is expended in lifting the leg, the longer, as a matter of course, will be the time before it comes to the ground to relieve the other. Now on the quick succession of relief that is afforded to each leg and foot mainly depends the safety of the horse's going; and it is this quick succession of step that renders many horses going near the ground as perfectly safe as they are. Many with tender feet never make a serious blunder; the reason is this, and a very simple one, — their infirmity renders resting long on one foot painful; consequently, they bring the other quickly to its relief, so if they do make a mistake they do not give themselves time to come down. Knowing this to be the case, I would greatly prefer, in point of safety as to his action, riding a fair goer, though he might be, in stable term, "a little dickyish in his feet," than a plodding goer, who, to carry on the same term, was "as sound as an acorn."

The propriety, therefore, of selecting or rejecting a horse with high or low action may be reduced to this point. If a horse is wanted for show purposes only, or for sale, buy nothing but what has high and fast action, little matter with

the generality of men whether the action be true and good, or not, he will be admired, and will *sell*. If he is wanted for ease, comfort, and durability, buy nothing but what has fast and true action, and then the less fuss he makes about going the better.

When quite a boy I wanted a tandem leader. I had a decided goer for shaft work. I was at a fair looking at a horse with very imposing action, that I much fancied. An old country dealer was near me, as the horse was being shown out for my approval. "Ah," said he (alluding to the horse), "*he's* a bit of a trunk-maker, *he* is." On asking a definition of the term, the old man said, "there's a deal more noise than work in he." As like most other boys, I then thought I knew a good deal; this cut made me shrink into my shoes, I left the trunk-maker, but never forgot the lesson.

CHAP. VI.

POINTS IN THE MAKE AND SHAPE OF THE HORSE, MORE OR LESS DESIRABLE. — PHYSIOGNOMY. — THE NECK. — SHOULDERS AND WITHERS. — LOW IN THE BACK. — SHORT BACK RIBS. — SMALL FEET. — GENERAL APPEARANCE AND CONDITION OF THE HORSE.

HAVING mentioned the chief ordinary habits likely to be found in horses offered for sale, we will now look towards such points in shape and make as may influence their utility or pleasantry; these not dependent on habit, but such as, from natural causes, independent of their own will, temper, or disposition, render them more or less desirable, or are indicative of peculiarities in either of those attributes.

PHYSIOGNOMY.

The man who is so much taken up by admiring contemplation of his own face as to afford him no time to contemplate any thing else, may be perfectly indifferent as to the physiognomy of a horse; but if inattention to this feature in the animal embraced the possession of a refractory or dangerous one, he might find physiognomy in the horse worthy of notice.

Without previous knowledge of the animal, I candidly confess (and let those laugh at the idea that please to do so) I should greatly hesitate in buying a horse with a bad treacherous looking countenance. Many worthy men and many well disposed horses are, I grant, unfortunate in this particular. We should not value a friend the less for it; but it would certainly not induce us to form an acquaintance with the man possessing it, without cogent reasons for so doing. Then why should we with a horse. A good countenance in mankind is no doubt often deceptive; a forbidding one is certainly more honest; for on it we see in characters legible — beware! Few men, not from choice, but circumstances, have had a more extensive acquaintance with man than myself, and, perhaps, not one man in a thousand from the same cause has made acquaintance with more horses. I have found rogues with prepossessing countenances in both; but I never, to my recollection, had to do with man or beast of forbidding countenance that proved apostate to the sign nature had put up indicative of what was passing within. Ugly as sin either may be: this has nothing on earth to do with a forbidding aspect. I do not hold a pug dog very handsome as to face, and I knew a girl as like one, excepting in colour, as she well could be; but she was the best and merriest little girl in existence; everybody loved

her; she found a very sensible and handsome fellow that not only loved, but married her. I wish my reader as amiable a companion.

I have in other things that I have written mentioned my having passed several years in Ireland, where many hundred horses passed through my hands every year. This made me pretty intimately acquainted with Irish horses. These have, comparatively with English ones, generally suspicious sinister looking countenances — contracted and lowering brows; and no man acquainted with the animals of both countries can doubt but that Irish horses have worse tempers than English ones. This peculiarity of countenance in the Irish horse, no doubt proceeded from breed; for I have remarkèd that lately it has as much improved as has his general shape and make. A few years since an Irish horse could be recognised among fifty English ones; but the three cornered made ones are now seldom seen, and as fine level horses come from Ireland as the most fastidious could wish to see.

Tracing back, as we can do, the origin of the thoroughbred horse to a cross with the Arab, whose heads are deer-like in formation, we might naturally enough expect to find all race-horses with small heads. This is, however, by no means always, though generally, the case. Eclipse had by no means a beautiful head. Dick Andrews,

as good and honest a horse as ever ran, had a very large head. To come to recent racers, that most capital of sires and race-horses, Touchstone, had no deer-like head, though an honest looking one; Cymba, a late winner of the Oaks, has a head more like collar work than racing; Mendicant, another Oaks winner, has a large, I may say very large, head; Van Tromp has a really ugly head, added to not the handsomest body in the world; and that capital and truly honest horse St. Lawrence has a head showing less breeding than I should wish in the head of a hunter. The reader or buyer would, therefore, be very unwise in rejecting any horse, because he may have a *large* head; for it is no proof at all of want of breeding: there is, however, one peculiarity in the form of the head of the race-horse in which he is very rarely indeed deficient—this is, that, however large his head may be from the top to the bottom of the jaw, we may mostly, in figurative stable language, "put their nose in a quart pot." I do not know or recollect one coarse from the jaw downwards, and this common bred horses usually are. Nothing, in my estimation, can be so disgusting as this, or at once so fully evinces vulgarity of origin. Be a head as large as it may upwards, we may say, as a huntsman said of a favourite hound, "if his head is large, he has a great deal of sense in it;" but a head large below the jaw, looks like

a portmanteau, set end ways. Let the head, if it is even large, be made somewhat wedge like, and it will not be a very bad one.

Many persons look greatly to ears, and consider small ones indicative of good breeding. In refutation of this I only beg to remark that, that lowest bred of most horses, the black Hanoverian, is often remarkable for small ears, and those standing as we term "pricked." Our large dray and distillers' horses have mostly small ears comparatively with their size and bulk. One peculiarity of the ear, the thoroughbred horse most certainly generally possesses: they are thin, and if they are, though they may be pendant, as those of a lop-eared rabbit, it speaks nothing against the aristocratic origin of his family.

A large full eye I hold to be a very leading indication of good breeding, though, of course, many good horses have it not; but more or less race-horses usually have; and in mentioning as I do such horses, I mean it in this way, that the more we can get the attributes of the race-horse combined with the strength we want, the better horse we shall get for any purpose.

There is another form of the head that, without referring to beauty, is indicative of valuable properties, or their reverse, namely, — the width between the jaw-bones: I would wish such as would almost conceal a wine-bottle. It is not my

province here or intention to enter into anatomical reasons why, but experience has authorised me in saying, that horses narrow between the jaws, or in any way, in stable phrase, "tied up about the throat," are very seldom good winded ones.

I will now, therefore, sum up my observations on the head by saying, in as concise terms as possible, get thin ears, a prominent eye, wide jaws, and a small nose, and you will not get hold of a very bad sort. As to other beauties of it, I leave those to the reader's taste. If a horse possess none of the leading features of goodness I have mentioned, and you *know* him to be good, of course, buy him; if he only possess some of them or all in a very mediocre degree, get to know him well before you trust to him; if he possess none of them, and you cannot get a proof of his materials, reject him; for in nine cases in ten by so doing, you will have escaped the possession of a dull bad bred, bad winded, or bad disposed horse, or, perhaps, all of these failings in the same animal.

THE NECK.

If you want a horse for park purposes, and to be admired by mere park riders, go to the most famous rocking-horse manufacturer that you can find: look at the imposing sort of neck of such

wooden animals, and then buy a horse with one as like them as possible; but, as I anticipate my reader not to be quite one of this sort, or to want a horse merely to please the multitude, I should recommend him to look at the horses of some of the many sportsmen, sensible men, and men of acknowledged good judgment in horses, that at a particular season he will see riding in that place. I am ready to grant that a park horse is an animal for show purpose; that he should be handsome, we will say beautiful: it is not necessary he should have the indications of crossing a country, but he should have indications of being of esteemed make of his kind; and, allowing him to be a toy, he should possess that form and those attributes that indicate his being safe, pleasant to ride, and graceful in his action. Let him show these, and be he charger, Arab, Spanish Jennet, cob, or thoroughbred, the judgment of the rider will not be disputed. Others may not like the *kind;* but this is a mere matter of taste. A good thing of any kind must be admired by every man of liberal mind. It is only where mere show and a bad sort is exhibited, that the judgment, and to a certain degree the sense, of the rider becomes questionable.

The rocking-horse kind of neck I allude to is rarely seen appertaining to the high-bred horse, and, though well looking enough for harness, will

very seldom be found flexible enough to render a horse pleasant to ride, if, added to this, the head is so set into the neck as to make a kind of continued curve from the chest to the back lip. I would reject such a horse for riding purposes without mounting. He cannot from formation bring, as we say in riding term, "his head in;" that is, he cannot make his nose approach his bosom; and instead of yielding to the bit will always be fighting or boring against it. We can command such a horse's mouth, but not his head; and, unless we can bring the head to a proper position, we can neither make a horse go handsomely or safely, so far as action is concerned.

A moderately thin neck, and one rather inclining to be short than unusually long, is the sort of one for both wind and pleasantry.

SHOULDERS AND WITHERS.

Many persons will at once reject a horse that is, what is often termed, low shouldered. With submission to persons using this term, it is a most inappropriate one. I know what they mean by it. But in using it, or when they use it, it is not the *shoulder* they look at, but the *wither*, which has little, indeed nothing, to do, either with the action of the horse or his carrying his saddle. The carrying the saddle in a handsome place—that is,

not too forward — depends on the muscles behind the shoulder; and the shoulder itself being set well back and obliquely from its point. The wither may then be as low as it pleases; the saddle will, indeed must, retain a proper place: a very high wither is only in the way, and, if greatly elevated, is liable to be injured by the saddle. I would rather reject than select a high withered horse. High-bred horses have a handsomely turned wither, and that turn or curve is much longer in its sweep, and goes farther back than with ordinary bred horses. But we do not see well made race-horses, when drawn as fine as they can be as to flesh, what is termed "razor withered." The reader will generally find the horse that is so, thin between the rider's legs, narrow in his own chest, and a weak horse. Many persons, on seeing such a horse, might say, "what a fine rising shoulder he has." I might probably reply, "excuse me, he has a bad shoulder, and what almost amounts to a deformity above it;" and should in such a case recommend a rejection of him: another horse, otherwise of the same height, might measure two inches less from the ground to the top of the wither, and have a shoulder in perfection.

Let not, therefore, the buyer reject a horse that may not *appear* to have a rising shoulder: his shoulder may be as high or higher than most horses; it is only the wither that is not high.

Nor is width, or what some persons may term a thick shoulder, to be by any means objected to, as it often is. Eclipse was somewhat thick in this part, and, provided the horse has action, and there is a desirable obliquity of shoulder, his being, not coarse, but strong across from the top of one blade-bone to the other, is no imperfection; but the reverse. If a rider dismounts from a strong shouldered horse, and finds he has not been carried pleasantly, he may say, "I was sure such a *thick*-shouldered brute could not go." In such a case, if he would look a little more into the cause, he would most probably find he had been riding a *straight*-shouldered brute: this prevented his going well and safe, not the strength of shoulder. A judge could have told him before mounting that such a horse could not be otherwise than he found him, and would have saved him the trouble of trial by advising such a horse to be rejected. I will not say, it is *impossible* that a horse straight in the shoulder should go well and safe, but, among the numberless horses I have ridden, I never rode one that could, or at least did.

LOW IN THE BACK.

The idea of such horses being extremely weak in this part deters numbers from bestowing a

second look at such as are thus made. That the reader may not do this, we will look a little as to the extent to which such opinions need be carried. We will say nothing as to its appearance, as the rejecting or not of such a horse on this account only, depends wholly how far it may or may not be objectionable to the particular buyer.

That low backed horses are on an average not so strong as those more regularly formed is highly probable, although I am not aware that the fact has been practically proved; indeed, I could instance several horses more than commonly low in the back that have carried heavy weights with hounds, and have not been found at all deficient in powers. Without entering into anatomical discussion of this point, I will produce a, perhaps, very unprofessional, but not altogether, I conceive, inappropriate, illustration of why a low back may not be as weak as its appearance denotes.

A sheet of ice of an inch thick, it is well known, will support an enormous weight under ordinary circumstances; make it three times the thickness, and draw off the water, it will not support its own weight.

The low back is consequent on the curve of the spine. The spine of itself possesses little strength: it is the supporting parts that constitute this. These are the ribs and muscles. To bring the

simile of ice again to my aid: if a sheet of water could remain in or be brought to the form of a chair cushion that is made high at the sides, and low along the centre, and in that form became frozen, the ice, supported by the water, would be perhaps nearly as strong as if a straight surface: it is only when concavity is unsupported that it becomes weak.

These considerations, added to observation and practical test, induce me to advise the reader not to reject an otherwise clever horse merely from a fear of a low back being unable to carry him.

The reader may perhaps be surprised, if I state that I am by no means clear, but that a low backed horse may be less liable to injury of the spine than the straighter; and still more than the rather convexly formed back. This idea is, however, of too professional a nature, be it right or wrong, for me to decide upon: but I form it on these grounds.

Whenever there is elasticity, if we get a requisite degree of strength with it, the elastic part will, so far as itself alone is concerned, be less liable to breakage than a stiff unyielding one: it is well known to coachmen, that a loaded coach that may appear to rock or swing a little with its weight, is less liable to breakage, or to upset, than the stiff running one: the rope of fifty

yards long that would hold a vessel would be snapped at the first lurch if reduced to three feet.

It will be borne in mind, that I am not asserting, whether the low back does or does not yield more than the higher one; if it is not found to do so, there is no palpable or suspicious demonstration of weakness; if it does, then my theory of elasticity, being equivalent to a given diminution of stiff strength, is tenable. How far strains of the muscles of the back may be more probable in low backed horses than others, the profession no doubt could at once decide; but I cannot but entertain a surmise, that, where dislocation or injury of the spine (at leaps, particularly) has occurred, had the part been more elastic, in other words, more yielding, such catastrophe might not have occurred.

I have already spoken of horses cringing from the saddle on being mounted. I need, therefore, scarcely say, if the low backed horse does this, I should at once reject him; not for being low backed, or, should I suspect that circumstance as causing this shrinking from weight, but because from some cause he did so; if I found the hollow back firm and strong under me, I should fearlessly buy such a horse.

SHORT BACK RIBS.

This formation, or malformation, is frequently objected to by those whose only cause of objection is not the fault itself, but the horse appearing light in the carcase, which horses thus formed (in working condition) must necessarily be. I most decidedly object to such horses also, not from being light in the middle, but from wanting that length of rib, and corresponding supporting muscle requisite for strength, where strength in the horse is particularly required, namely, under and beyond the cantle of the saddle. I have said, I do not object to light bodied horses; nor do I; but what I mean by being light is merely absence of intestinal protrusion, that is vulgarly termed Belly; the deeper the horse is in the brisket or ribs the better, provided the carcase is round and handsome.

Horses with short back ribs are often speedy ones, and are well enough for a mile race-horse: but they are more or less unfit for weight. The fatigue this occasions is probably the cause why such horses are apt to be bad feeders: by bad, I mean cannot be got to eat enough between one hunting, or hard day's work, and another. Such horses are a great pest. Let horses that are delicate eat when they will, and when they

can, but a proper quantity in a given time in accordance with their work they must be able to eat, or they are useless.

I had a very brilliant and most speedy horse, who was very short in his back ribs. I drew a hundred and ten and took him, for a young horse I had purchased at eighty, or I would not have had him; he was like a half-starved greyhound when I got him, would scarce eat enough to support a goat, and was constantly scouring. I stopped this very shortly; and without presuming to prescribe for others, I accomplished it by dosing him pretty largely with Ext. Hæmatoxilæ, and the usual spices given to horses, for a few days, and then polished him off with Catechu, spice, and good home-brewed ale. It stopped the habitual scouring. He came to his appetite, and when I sold him, was in as fine condition as a race-horse; in short, in stable phrase, "fit to go for a man's life:" but it is necessary to say, I never called on him for hounds more than once in ten days, and he had only eleven stone on him, no unimportant feature in the success of my practice, as my own vet. in his case.

That under particular circumstances I took to such an animal has nothing to do with my appreciation thereof: if one is shown to my reader I as strongly recommend him to reject him at once, as I should guard him against re-

fusing a horse for being light in the carcase if otherwise well formed.

SMALL FEET.

I have alluded to small feet before in this work; but then I alluded to feet being objectionable as to size from contraction by disease. I now only mention them as small from natural formation. Many a good and perfectly sound horse is at once rejected on account of his feet being unusually small, and this from a very natural suspicion that contraction has brought them to such appearance. Contraction will unquestionally induce and produce small feet. It in no shape follows that small feet must have been diseased to become small. It certainly requires considerable experience and professional knowledge to judge of the propriety of purchasing a horse with such feet; and where there is professional advice to be got for ten and sixpence, if a man to save that runs any risk in purchasing, he has only to blame his short-sighted parsimony if he gets a lame horse. One of the great objects of this work is in no way to attempt to qualify or to advise the reader to judge for himself of the propriety of *buying* a faulty or suspicious looking horse, but to prevent him at once *rejecting* such without taking professional advice on the occasion, and,

where it is not a professional case, not to reject a horse with defects, or fancied defects, without the opinion of a good judge of such matters, where such is to be got. Therefore, when I say, "buy such a horse," I mean do not reject him, he is worth an opinion; when I say unequivocally reject him, it is only when I know better judges than myself would say "reject him" also.

There is one strong feature in small feet, that may guide the reader as to whether the animal is worth taking an opinion upon. This is, if the fore feet are small, look at the hind ones, if they are small also, I should infer the size was natural formation; if not, I should be suspicious; for, without pretending to say what others may have seen, and known, I do not remember ever to have met with a horse with small fore feet and large hind ones, where the size of the fore ones was natural: nor is the absolute size of the foot, though it be on the whole large, a guarantee against contraction. This merely shows that the whole hoof is not contracted; for it may be, as a whole, as big as a platter, yet may the most material and sensible part of it be under severe contraction. Contraction may be partial or general: a horse's foot may be generally narrow, like a canal barge, yet be no more contracted than the barge itself. Mules' and asses' feet are thus shaped, yet they keep perfectly sound. The general shape of these

show us it is a natural one. But the wide foot and narrow heel is none of the handicraft of nature. There is an indescribable look in a contracted hoof, that an experienced eye detects at once; there is in it, if I may so express myself, a total absence of that shape and freshness we see in the foot of the sound colt. I have seen feet contracted so uniformly, and generally, as to be particularly handsome in appearance. The texture of the hoof of such feet is often seen to be singularly fine in the grain, and looking almost as though it had been polished. Such are a very bad sort indeed. Fortunately, a horse having such is generally too lame to deceive the generality of purchasers. A foot may be far *narrower* than such, yet quite sound.

We will now look to a much more unsightly natural malformation, which is unusually large feet. I should almost be tempted to say to my reader, reject such a horse, not on account of unsoundness, for it is only in very few cases where feet get enlarged from any disease; but personally I would refuse him, because I rarely, indeed never, rode a thoroughly pleasant, light, active goer with very large feet; and as to soundness, I am quite certain the naturally large foot is as likely to become lame as the naturally small one; indeed, I would say more so at fast road work. Large feet require large shoes. Large shoes must have a considerable weight of iron, and this re-

quires large nails. Now a large flat foot is not always accompanied by a proportionate strength and thickness of crust, rather, I should say, the reverse, unless it be in the cart-horse, where the foot is proportionate with the body. But here it is no malformation. Where it is so, the size of the foot is constituted of the sensible part of it. It becomes, therefore, a matter of considerable difficulty with the smith to keep a foot sound, where large nails and a heavy shoe are indispensable to a foot not calculated to carry either, yet, without proportioning the cover of the shoe to the expanse of the foot, such a horse cannot be kept sound at road work. This alone would make me reject him. Again, these large footed horses are very liable to interfere, that is cut, and when fatigued, are almost sure to do so. I consider a walk their pace, and a cart their proper situation.

I believe I have now discussed the principal variations of form likely to be found in such a horse as I presume my reader would look at, or would be shown to him for sale; that is, such forms as are likely to interfere for or against his pleasantry or utility. We will now say something as to

GENERAL APPEARANCE.

The different breeds of horses are so varied, and the difference in point of appearance of each

breed so varied also, that, to enter minutely into the subject, would require an entire volume of larger extent than I intend this to be; and further, the tastes of different men are so opposed to each other, that, if I ventured to state my own, supposing some might allow that taste to be tolerable, others might anathematize it as execrable.

If Mr. Osbaldiston was so situated as to be unable to look out for a hunter for himself, had not friends, better judges than I, ready to take this trouble for him, and therefore wanting a better agent, fixed on me for the purpose, I venture to think I could suit him, as I should look for what I should quite like for myself. But if a young gentleman fresh from the east of London wanted his *first* horse, I should be, as Pat says, "bothered entirely." My only chance of pleasing him and most probably his friends would be, to get him something as unlike what I or most of my friends would be pleased with as I possibly could.

All this is quite right. "The Squire" liked his horse Clasher; so should I very much if a touch-me-not gate was before me, or indeed if it was not. Our young English Nabob would like a prancer. All right again. May "the Squire" ever get all he likes; and if our Eastender is a good fellow may he get what he likes also, and find a

more suitable man than me to help him to it, for I am pretty sure I could not.

If a man is at the expense of keeping horses, though he of course keeps such as please himself, if he is candid he will allow that he wishes to have such as will be admired and esteemed by the class of horsemen with which he most associates, be he a hunting man, trotting man, military man, or the mere park man. Whether riding or driving be his forte or taste, whether he likes the thoroughbred hack or strong cob, it is all the same: each likes his own judgment to be thought good as regards the style of horse he uses.

We sometimes see a person on a nondescript useless sort of wretch, making him show off, and render himself and rider as ostensible as possible. We naturally laugh at such an exhibition, and of course set down the rider as a weak man. I would answer for it that more or less he would be found so; not because he rode a worthless horse, but because he made a senseless display with him. All observation the horse need call forth would be, that his owner knew nothing of horses. Still men of his own clique would probably think he knew a great deal. Of his own conviction on the subject there need be no doubt.

One or two recommendations, however, I will venture to give to my reader as regards selecting

or rejecting a horse from his general appearance, which are these.

Ride or use any breed or description of horse that suits your fancy, or rather pursuits, but select such as are of a good sort of their *kind*, and reject such as are not.

Ride or use such horses as are appropriate to the purposes to which you put them, and do not be persuaded to buy any other: when I say appropriate, I mean as to qualifications, and still better if in appearance also.

By qualifications I mean chiefly appropriate action; for if a man, determined to have a fine horse to ride from his villa to London, or in the Park, had given two thousand for Harkaway, I can tell him he would have been uncomfortably carried; if he rode a mere park horse, or a pleasant safe cob, with the Atherstone in their Leicestershire country, he would be equally uncomfortably carried, and not carried far either. These are, I grant, extreme cases; but really many persons do verge on them in their selection of horses; and so long as they do they may select and reject, as often as they please: they never will be pleasantly carried, or derive that credit for the expense they go to that they anticipate.

Although a knowledge of or judgment in horses, or the want of either, has nothing at all to do with a man's general sense or talent, the

using a bad sort really, in the estimation of other persons, has; for if his horse is unfit for him, in something like the words in the Good-natured Man, "he is sure to have some d—— good-natured friend to tell him of it." He must, therefore, be vain, arrogant, or obstinate, in keeping at an expense that from which he, so far from gaining credit by, incurs something very closely bordering on ridicule.

Never wishing to give offence where I can avoid it, I must observe that there are numberless men using horses seemingly very inappropriate to their purpose, who may say, "whatever my horse may look, he carries me safe, and, to me, pleasantly:" then I should say, "the horse is *not* inappropriate to the purpose he is used for;" but my predilection in favour of looks would tempt me to say, if I could venture to do so, "ride that horse as long as he carries you as you like, but when you buy again, do get something that looks more *like* the thing; he may as well, and much better, eat your oats than a nondescript looking animal, that does you no credit."

In a pecuniary point of view the reader will, I know, find my advice good as to appearance in the horse. A good sort, for any given purpose, will always readily sell; a middling looking one is a positive drug: and I suspect that those who are seduced into buying such, generally are, at

the same time, persuaded to give more than they are worth. A clever one with a fault, or faults, like a clever servant, will always find a master; an unmeaning looking horse is only marketable among those who give very unmeaning prices.

Most unreservedly, therefore, I recommend a purchaser not to be taken by the general appearance of a mere *pretty* horse; for many are such, and, at the same time, calculated for no one useful purpose. He may be certain such are by no means a safe investment of money; but a good sort bought at a proper price are a valuable acquisition to the owner while in his possession, and also a valuable and marketable commodity if offered for sale.

CONDITION.

In selecting a horse, his being in condition or not at the time involves several serious considerations; for, setting aside fluctuations as to a horse being lame or ill, or sound and well, no circumstance in ordinary occurrence raises or lowers the temporary value of a horse so much as condition: the want of it reduces beauty to plainness; while high condition, or, in this instance, I should rather say flesh, hides numberless faults of form, and gives freshness of appearance

to comparative age, and comparative freshness to age itself. The reader should, therefore, be satisfied he is a very good judge before he selects a very lusty horse, or rejects one in low condition; for a spare man playing Falstaff, whose sides we see shake as he walks on the stage, is not less altered when stripped of his stuffed garments, than are some fat horses when stripped of their flesh. The head that looked a fair shaped and sized one, when compared with a high crest and bulky body, when that bulk is gone, looks like a coal-scuttle hanging on the arm of a clothes beating horse; the body that looks round and plump when fat, if stripped, shows that fat, not rotundity of rib, caused its barrel form, and the ribs may show flat as a gridiron, and, possibly, the back ones not so long. The quantities of warm water, mashes, and bulky food, accustomed to be taken being diminished, and oats and work substituted for it, the carcase to which, probably, the attention of the purchaser had been called, becomes, in front of the hips, about the size of the loins of a monkey; the boasted crest of the neck, which the buyer was doubtless tempted or requested to feel, becomes soft, shrunken, and flaccid, without more supporting muscles at its side than a dinner knife. Worst of all, as the flesh is gone, verily so is the spirit; no need of the "who-ho Playboy" from the dealer; "there stand

master and horse, one in body; both, in spirits, flat, stale, and unprofitable."

Though I will not anticipate so exaggerated and *funeste* a result of any of my readers' purchases, I can assure him that such, in a mitigated way, is often the change of a fat horse to a thin one: unless the purchaser has an eye to see, and a hand to feel, what such an animal will be when his real form becomes developed; and that is no easy matter to decide on.

I by no means advise the rejection of a fat horse because he is so, if time can be given to get him fit to work; but if this cannot be afforded, and the buyer wants one to go to immediate use, be he promising or not, he will find by experience that my advice is good, when I say, *reject him at any price;* cheap he cannot eventually be: for if you work him in such a state, the chances are he will be even worse than I have above figuratively described; for those chances are greatly in favour of his shortly being a *dead* one.

Let us now look to purchasing or rejecting a horse out of condition from the reverse cause — poverty. There are but few cases in which I would, as I did in the one of the fat horse, advise the absolute rejection of the poor one. The only circumstances where I should unequivocally advise this would be, if it was ascertained that a

good judge had done all that could be done to produce proper condition, and had failed: of course I suppose the horse to be free from absolute sickness. If, on the contrary, there was any good cause for the poverty exhibited, and the horse was a moderate age, finely formed, sound (enough), and a good goer, I say, do not be deterred by his present appearance. Probably he is a good and may be a capital speculation. He has several recommendations over the fat one: you most likely see him at his worst, and buy him at his minimum price. If in health there is no chance, as with the fat one, of work injuring, and by proper care he will daily improve under your hands: for as regards work, though total idleness will conduce to the fatness of the hog, moderate work will not prevent a horse throwing up proper flesh, and what does increase will be good. My vote, therefore, in a general way, would be in favour of buying such a horse, if price was any object. There are, certainly, spare horses, like spare men, that never get fat: but the difference between a naturally spare habit and a poor horse can be both seen and felt: the *spare* horse will look fresh, and feel in good condition; the *poor* horse will do neither.

Horses will vary a good deal as to appearance in point of flesh on them, from difference of formation, and the prominence, or its reverse, of the

bones of the body: small bones, and those much rounded off, always give a well conditioned appearance to any animal; and, where a pretty and compact look is admired, such are the horses to be selected. Narrow round hips most particularly give a level look to the horse; but if a horse likely to be a performer is required, such make is any thing but desirable: it is the wide independent hip that sends horses along, enables the trotter to go on, and gives the bold sweeping stroke of the haunch that carries the galloping horse over a country or a race course. Whatever there may be to the eye as to appearance, from such make, let the reader pause before he rejects a horse on such account; for no good judge would, unless for a lady's park riding horse. This or any mere London riding horse is an animal so totally confined to mere purposes of show, that we need not trouble ourselves whether he possess properties indicating capability of great and lasting performance or not; if he is pleasing to the eye as to appearance and action, pleasant and safe to ride, he is all that is wanted. I have and do again recommend my reader getting good ones of their sort. Well such a horse as I have last mentioned as a park horse is good of *his* sort, but a consummate bad sort they would be found for any other purpose: no matter: a pair of white dress gloves should not be worn twice, so we

don't want them good, nor do we want park horses so either.

I have now carried my intent out as far as I proposed to myself, by having alluded to most of those real or fancied imperfections of horses that might induce my reader, as thousands of others daily do, to reject horses from first appearances, without properly investigating the amount of objection any imperfection may produce, or without consulting others on the subject. May I hope that what I have written may induce the purchaser to, at least, give the imperfect horse that chance that is accorded to the criminal, namely, the advantage of being brought before a judge, and the fair chance of trial. By doing so, he may depend on it, he will study his own comfort and interest, and will often get a valuable animal that an inconsiderate rejection would have lost him.

If the reader wishes to learn the perfections of the horse, many clever works will point them out to him. But let me remind him, that, though works tell him what a perfect horse is, they do not quite tell us where to find him; as the rogue equivocally said, you may "look to me" for payment; but I am not aware that looking to a man and being paid are quite the same thing.

There are other very clever works that bring all the diseases of the horse in array before us; those

diseases are so many, that the reader may be induced to despair of finding a horse sufficiently free from them to be sound enough for use, for they are seldom mentioned in a mitigated form: so, what between the looking for perfection, and the fear of purchasing a combination of maladies, the reader might go without a horse at all.

I have meant this book to steer a middle course. It is not a work on the perfections of the animal, or of his complaints; it is, or, at least, I have meant it to be, a fair discussion of the quantum of inconvenience likely to accrue from different imperfections in the horse. Weighing well, therefore, the *pour* and *contre*, in selecting a horse with any of these, for one or some, depend on it, almost every horse will have, the reader's good sense will enable him to decide on what imperfection is the least objectionable for the particular purpose for which he means to purchase. Perfection he cannot get; but I sincerely hope that the perusal of this work may, in some measure, assist him in purchasing a horse with fewer objectionable points about him than I fear will be found to exist in the work itself.

THE END.

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